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[THE JOURNEY TO THE WARREN.]

FICKLE FORTUNE.*

By the Author of "Maurice Durant," etc.

CHAPTER LXI.

What you cannot as you would achieve
You must perforce accomplish as you may.
Shakespeare.

THE two men were almost silent during their journey to the Warren.

Sir Charles, seemingly fearful of losing sight of the old lawyer, sent his horse on by the groom and availed himself of a seat in Mr. Reeves's neat and comfortable brougham.

The old gentleman sat with his eyes bent upon the costly rug that lined the floor, with sometimes his hand raised to shield them from the light that unpleasantly pierced through the open windows, and conceal from his companion the evidence of the various emotions which troubled his soul.

At last the Warren was reached, and Rebecca stood awaiting them in the grand old drawing-room. She shook the old lawyer's hand with a grateful emphasis.

"I knew you would not desert me," she said, in a low voice.

"And yet to refrain from doing so I must needs desert another," he said, shaking his head. "But, come, let me hear all if I am to hear anything."

"You shall hear all," she said.

And after the three had toyed listlessly with the substantial viands upon the luncheon table they went into Rebecca's quiet little room, and there she repeated the story which had so horrified Sir Charles.

Mr. Reeves proved a very different listener, however.

During the whole recital—often interrupted by Rebecca's tears—he made no sign nor uttered a single word. But at every important point he jotted down a memorandum upon his slip of paper, as he had prepared to do in his own room with Sir Charles; and when Rebecca had finished he slowly and calmly mused over what he had written.

Of course Rebecca had concealed nothing. She had even spoken of her liking for Hugh Darrell and assigned his quarrel and subsequent dismissal from the Hall to its baleful cause.

She could speak of it now with scarcely a blush, for it had long ago vanished and disappeared.

All that was past; if Hugh Darrell could reappear to-morrow and ask her for its resurrection it could not leave its grave again. It was dead, and a glow of inward light and satisfaction thrilled Sir Charles as he heard her declare it.

Mr. Reeves mused for some minutes, then he looked up, and with a painful mixture of sadness and sternness in his tone said:

"You are right; there is at least the suspicion of foul play."

"I knew it!" exclaimed Rebecca, turning pale and clasping her hands. "I knew it all through, yet you cannot imagine how painful the words sound coming from you who are not likely to be deceived."

The old lawyer shook his head.

"I am an old man," he said, "and not far from the grave; Sir Charles, Miss Goodman, at this moment I fervently wish I had already reached it. It is a hard fate for me, having served the Dale for a lifetime loyally and faithfully, to be compelled to bring disgrace within its threshold."

"Nay!" said Rebecca, warmly. "You serve it still! Remember that for all we know poor Hugh or Grace is still alive; which is better, to leave them wronged and injured, or restore them, though in so doing you bring one of their race to justice?"

He nodded.

"Have you any reason for supposing either of them still alive?"

"No," she said. "Excepting the slight one these anonymous notes may give."

He bent his brows and examined the documents carefully.

"You cannot trace any likeness in the handwriting to Hugh Darrell's?"

"Nor any one else," she said. "I have spent hours in attempting to find some familiar letter or word, but without success. Sometimes I have fancied, but

fancied only, that they might have been written by Grace."

The lawyer looked up and shook his head.

"No," he said, "if you are right in saying that she believed Hugh Darrell to be dead."

"She did, most decidedly," said Rebecca, "often she has spoken of him as poor uncle's dead Hugh. Besides, these were posted in London; if Grace were there she would soon be here. She knew that I loved her, and she would know that Sir Harry is dead. There is nothing to keep her from me—nothing, for she knew that Reginald Dartmouth tried to snare her for her wealth and would know that now, seeing he had got all he wanted, he would leave her unmolested."

"You think he did not love her?" asked Mr. Reeves.

"Impossible!" was the instantaneous reply. "Reginald Dartmouth could not love."

Mr. Reeves thought for a moment or two, then he said:

"I agree with you that the advice which this anonymous note gives is the best under the circumstances. In the well, in my opinion, lies the clue to the mystery."

"Ah," said Sir Charles, "the well, that's it. We must get at that."

"But how?" asked Mr. Reeves, with a deep sigh. "We cannot take possession of it with spade and pick; the steward or the gardener would prevent us. An action for trespass would lie."

"Can it not be done at night—secretly?" asked Sir Charles. "I and a strong man could dig it out before the morning."

The lawyer shook his head.

"No," he said, "that would not do. They would see the lights from the lodge or hear the click of the spades. Before you had been at work five minutes we should be discovered. No, that will not do. Yet we must get it by some means. Let me think."

And he put his hand to his forehead.

The two sat quite silent, they knew how keen the brain of the old man was, and were patient.

Presently he looked up.

"I have it," he said, and they noticed that the sad expression of his face had given way to a keen, acute look that showed he was interested in the pursuit and had become reconciled to it. "I have it. You are still believed to be Reginald Dartmouth's friend—nay, do not shrink; cunning must be met by cunning. You cannot but be sensible that you are dealing with a rogue and not a gentleman, Sir Charles! I say you are still believed to be his friend. If I remember rightly you had the planning out of the racecourse; it was a pity you did it so admirably, for your own sake," and he glanced at his now healed arm, then continued: "The steward and the gardener are fully aware of that."

"The gardener is quite manageable," said Sir Charles.

"Just so," resumed the lawyer. "Your plan must be this. This afternoon—for no time must be lost—you must walk round and see the steward. Tell him that you have been requested by Reginald Dartmouth to see that a few alterations are made in the shrubberies. Take him with you to the well, and while looking round decide—as if on the spur of the moment—that you will have that dug out and ask how soon that can be done."

"He will say a week or two," said Sir Charles, shaking his head.

"Without doubt," said Mr. Reeves, curtly, "but you will of course be impatient; declare that you would like it commenced first and, if need be, throw off your coat and, as it is just, say that you will take a turn at it yourself."

"I see, I see!" exclaimed Sir Charles.

Mr. Reeves, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, went on without noticing the interruption.

"You will find the men ready enough then; few workmen can resist the temptation of working side by side with a baronet."

"Then for once my title will be of some service!" sighed Sir Charles.

Mr. Reeves nodded—he was still thinking.

"That is not all. I must be on the spot, there must be no lack of witnesses when whatever is to be found comes to light."

"Ay," said Sir Charles. "How will that be managed?"

"Leave it to me," replied Mr. Reeves. "We must not fail. Once make a false slip and Reginald Dartmouth will get an inkling. Should he do so I would give little for our chance of success. He is a rogue—if this evidence is trustworthy—but he is a clever one."

"I will go," said Sir Charles, "and do my part at once."

"And I," said Rebecca, "what can I do?—nothing but wait in devouring suspense. Oh, how much I have suffered these last few years."

Sir Charles bent his golden head over her downcast face.

"Be comforted, Rebecca," he murmured. "We are nearing the crisis now, at least."

She looked up with a sigh and a sad smile.

"Yes," she said, "but how nearer are we to finding poor Hugh?"

"Nearer than you may think, madam," said Mr. Reeves, looking up suddenly from his slip of paper. "I am not given to presentiments usually, but something tells me that he is not far off."

And there was the slightest tremor in the hard, dry voice as its owner rose and left the room in search of Mrs. Lucas, of whom he wished to ask a few questions.

CHAPTER LXII.

Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any disproportioned thought his act.
Shakespeare.

SIR CHARLES, eager to be at work, started for the new Hall within five minutes.

Thompson, the gardener, seeing him approach, came towards the gate to meet him.

Poor Sir Charles felt very uncomfortable, but he nerved himself to the unpleasant task by recalling Mr. Reeves's distinction between a gentleman and a rogue, and, with a cheery return of the gardener's salutation, passed into the grounds of Dale.

"How are the flowers?" he asked.

"All right, sir, thank you. Can I have the honour of making you up a few?"

"No, thanks," said Sir Charles, avoiding his eye. "The fact is, Thompson, I have just strolled down—I am staying at the inn—to execute a little commission for Captain Dartmouth."

"Yes, sir."

"Yes," continued Sir Charles. "By the way have you heard from your master during the last few days?"

"No, sir; not me; I seldom do; neither has the steward; he was only remarking this morning that he hadn't received any direct orders from Mr. Stanfield."

"Mr. Stanfield?" echoed Sir Charles, forgetting the name for the moment.

"Yes, sir, the secretary. He always writes, never Captain Dartmouth. It is very different to the old times, so the people say. Squire Harry used to have everything under his own eye."

"Ay," said Sir Charles, who seemed relieved by the intelligence that the steward had not heard from Reginald Dartmouth. "Well, there are a few alterations to be made, Thompson, and I am going to see them done."

He kept as far off a direct falsity as he could, but try hard as he certainly did he could not keep down a slight blush at the near approach to a falsehood. Sir Charles was new to the detective business.

"Ob, indeed, sir," said Mr. Thompson, who looked quite pleased. "Anything I can do, sir, I shall only be too happy. What is it, sir? about the grounds?"

"Y-e-s," said Sir Charles, "somewhere about the shrubberies; they are to be extended."

"Oh, I always wanted the captain to make more shrubs," said Thompson. "Only last time he spoke to me I ventured to suggest that there was a deal of wasted ground at the side of the house."

"Which side?" asked Sir Charles, quickly.

"I'll show you, sir, if you don't mind the trouble of stepping round to the side."

Sir Charles said he should be glad to do so, and Thompson, turning down his sleeves and slipping on his coat as a slight acknowledgment of the honour done him, led the way round the huge place.

Presently he stopped, and pointing his finger to the space round the well, said:

"That's the place, Sir Charles; that's the eyecore to the grounds. We tried all sorts of dodges to hide it, but it's all of no use. Roses won't do there near climbers. What it wants is a thorough turning over and planting."

"Just so," said Sir Charles, delighted with the way in which the man was playing into his hands, and forgetting that fortune is fickle and must change with all things. "Just so; that is the very place I want seen to. Planting you say would be best; but you would still have that well there to disagree it."

"Yes," said Thompson, staring at it thoughtfully. "Captain Dartmouth had it half filled up and the bricks knocked about to make it look like a ruin, but I said when it was being done it would look more like an ugly dustbin, and so it does."

"Yes; it is ugly," said Sir Charles. "I think it would be a good plan to level it, eh? What do you say?"

Thompson nodded approvingly.

"Very good plan indeed, sir."

"Get the rubbish out and level it over," said Sir Charles.

"Well, there will be no occasion to empty it—"

"Oh, don't you think so?" interrupted the other, with well-assumed indifference, and stepping up to the important spot with a careless gait. "Don't you think so? I think it would be better. By Jove, it would be good fun to lend a hand. Really I have a whim to try a little spade and shovel work!" and he laughed cheerily.

Thompson as in duty bound laughed too.

"I used to be able to ply a pick and spade as well as most boys in my youth. I wonder whether I've lost the knack!"

"Thompson," he continued, with a sudden laugh, "I tell you what we will do: You get one of your strong and quiet men to bring some tools, and then we will empty this old dusthole between us."

The gardener was delighted, as Mr. Reeves had prophesied. What a fine thing it would be to be able to say in a careless, offhand way over a glass of ale at the Darrell Arms that he had "just been digging up the old well with Sir Charles Anderson!"

Before he could reply, however, a man came round the corner and gave Sir Charles a respectful "Good-day."

It was the steward; and Sir Charles's luck was on the turn.

"Good-morning," said Thompson. "I'm glad you've come. Sir Charles is thinking of digging the rubbish out of this old well and levelling it. Captain Dartmouth wants shrubs here."

"Indeed!" said the steward, with a look of surprise. "Why, it is not long since the captain had it filled up."

Sir Charles's heart beat fast.

Was he to be balked at the last moment?

"How long ago was that? A long time, I think."

"Yes, it is some time," said the steward. "Perhaps Captain Dartmouth has changed his mind. It's very strange though, for he was so particular to have the well filled. He came down himself and saw the men started to work."

This, as may be imagined, made Sir Charles all the more anxious to gain his end.

"He has changed his mind, no doubt," he replied.

"When did you see Captain Dartmouth, Sir

Charles?" asked the steward, respectfully, and with nothing save curiosity in his tone.

"A few days since," replied the baronet, which was perfectly true. He had seen him in the park though not spoken to him.

"Well, we must do as the captain orders, of course," said the steward. "Can I render you any assistance, Sir Charles? I will send two or three men down if you will say when you would like it done."

"Oh, no; there is no occasion," replied Sir Charles, hastily. "Thompson and I are going to have a turn at it for the fun of the thing. I have got a spare afternoon and feel bored. This is a godsend. Go at once, my good friend, and bring the man and the tools."

Then as Thompson started off with gleeful pride the anxious dissembler asked a few questions of the steward and managed to elicit from him that he had an appointment with one of the tenants.

"Pray don't let me keep you," said Sir Charles, promptly, and so the steward was got rid of. Sir Charles gave vent to a sigh of relief, and sat down to await the arrival of the tools.

They were not long in coming.

Thompson and a stout but simple-looking under gardener appeared, and Sir Charles, seizing a pick, set to work with a will—with so much energy, indeed, that he found his coat too much of an encumbrance, and, pausing a moment, threw it off, tucking up his shirt sleeves and falling to again as hard as ever.

Mr. Thompson was filled with admiration.

This was something like an aristocratic brick! Here was a man who deserved to be a baronet and a gentleman. Talk of your stuck-up gentry, let some of the prating idiots come and look at this specimen! His admiration was raised to fever heat presently, when Sir Charles, straightening his back, wiped his forehead from its literal layer of perspiration and with a deep breath started the stupid-looking boy to the Darrell Arms for a gallon of best ale.

"This is healthy work, and thirsty too," he said, and added after Thompson's delighted "Yes, sir," "You have no idea how much good it is doing me,"—which was true, for the poor gardener could not possibly guess that the amiable baronet was working off a load of inward worry and dissatisfaction with every stroke of his spade.

It was a positive relief to Sir Charles, this plain piece of work in the long road of tangled hide and seek, spy, and detective course which Sir Charles had been heading.

The ale appeared and disappeared.

Sir Charles and his men fell to work, and now the aristocratic gardener commenced turning over every spadeful of earth as if searching for something.

"What are you looking for, Sir Charles?" asked Thompson.

"Eh?" said Sir Charles. "Oh, nothing. Fancied I saw a piece of mineral—what do you call it?—ore."

"Ore?" repeated Thompson.

"Y-e-s," said Sir Charles. "Don't you mind me. I am rather given to mineralogy." And he kept his eyes fixed intently upon each spadeful that was turned up.

Away they dug for another half-hour.

Sir Charles became more attentive to each handful of rubbish than before. He had ceased to dig himself, and was leaning on his spade, his eyes fixed upon the hole.

Suddenly he uttered a sharp cry and pointed to something white which the under gardener had just turned up.

Before the cry had quite died away some one from behind said:

"Good-morning, Sir Charles."

Mr. Thompson stooped to pick up the piece of folded paper, and then turned to see Mr. Reeves, the lawyer.

"What have you got there, Thompson?" he said, holding out his hand.

"A piece of paper of some sort, sir," said the gardener, carefully handing it to him as he spoke. "We are digging up the well, you see, sir. Captain Dartmouth—"

An exclamation from the old lawyer stopped him.

"What's the matter, sir?"

And, following Sir Charles's example, he dropped his spade and jumped out of the hole.

"Who found this?" asked Mr. Reeves, with almost stern gravity.

"I did, sir," replied Mr. Thompson. "At least Sir Charles first saw it as Hodges turned it over."

Mr. Reeves folded the paper and held it firmly in his hand.

"This is a most important document," he said, "most important. Mr. Thompson, have the goodness to send your man for Dr. Todley. I left him walking in the road."

"Certainly, sir," responded the rather alarmed gardener, and Hodges was despatched.

He returned in a few minutes with the old doctor. Sir Charles, with his coat on, now stood pale and motionless, wiping the perspiration from his face.

"Have the goodness to glance at that, Dr. Todley," said Mr. Reeves, in his dry tones.

"Heaven bless me!" exclaimed the doctor, after a few minutes' bewildered perusal. "Why this is—"

"Silence!" said Mr. Reeves. "Not a word, if you please, sir. Sir Charles, Mr. Thompson, you, my man, all of you who saw this paper must keep your lips closed concerning it. I shall want you, all of you, to tell some one where and how it was found, but until I request you have the goodness to keep the matter a profound secret. Sir Charles and you, Thompson, I can depend upon, but this man, is he trustworthy?"

"I can answer for him, sir," replied the gardener. "Hodges will be dumb if I tell him to hold his tongue. Dear me, dear me, I hope nothing is amiss; that is to say—"

"You have no cause for alarm," said Mr. Reeves, "only keep silent. Sir Charles, doctor, have the goodness to accompany me."

Sir Charles and the bewildered physician did as they were ordered, and together the three gentlemen started for the Warren.

CHAPTER LXIII.

In the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

Shakespeare.

If Mr. Reeves had taken unto himself a motto wherewith to carry him through life it was surely, "Be consistent and do your duty."

The painfulness of the position in which he was so unexpectedly placed can easily be understood and appreciated.

Here, without a word of notice, or note of warning, he had been startled by the announcement of some foul play, some evil work enacted by his most influential client; he had been furthermore requested, and in a measure compelled to take cause against him; and now, as a finale to his wonder, a positive and irrefutable proof of his client's crime had been placed in his hands.

It was very hard upon him, and for a few minutes the poor old gentleman felt inclined to give up in despair, but Rebecca and Sir Charles would not allow that.

They hedged him round, consoled him, and at last ventured to ask the contents of the soiled and dirty document.

"The contents!" he exclaimed, piteously, feeling the outside of his pocket, and looking sternly straight in front of him. "Why, madam, this paper is nothing more nor less than Squire Harry Darrell's last will."

"Oh," cried Rebecca, sinking into a chair and turning deadly white. "Oh, dear, oh, dear, it is true then! It is true! Oh, dear! Oh, dear! The poor Squire!"

The old lawyer started, her ejaculations brought back to his mind another and more fearful point at issue.

"Ah!" he said, and he rose from his chair. "There is no time to lose. This is fearful. Sir Charles, I would give half the fortune I have honourably earned by many years of honest labour to be able to wash my hands of this! Why, sir," he continued, with grave sternness, "this is more than embezzlement—this is—murder!"

"Murder!" exclaimed Dr. Todley, who had been standing beside Rebecca, in vain endeavouring to calm her. "Murder, Mr. Reeves! Surely I did not hear aright?"

Recalled to his usual calm by the fussy little doctor's exclamation, the lawyer buttoned his coat and beckoned Sir Charles aside.

A short conversation and an excited one on Sir Charles's part ensued, and was terminated by the baronet breaking away and going to Rebecca.

"Rebecca," he said. "Mr. Reeves is obdurate, he will not listen to me; he wishes to place the affair in the hands of—"

"Of the proper authorities," put in Mr. Reeves, sternly. "Madam, this is a clear case for the Treasury. There is sufficient evidence to warrant the arrest of a certain individual. It is your duty, nay more, my duty, to see that it is done; I—"

"No—no," said Rebecca, alarmed. "Mr. Reeves, you will ruin all. Sir Charles, tell him our plan. Oh, pray persuade him."

Sir Charles then communicated a scheme which he and Rebecca had concocted.

It was very simple, but it was some time before the stern, unbending old lawyer would agree to it.

Duty was duty, he declared, and his duty at that

crisis was to place the will and the evidence in the hands of the police.

At last, however, he gave way, and, seating himself at Rebecca's writing-table, wrote a short letter to Reginald Dartmouth, requesting his immediate attendance at the new Hall.

"And you think this will catch him," he said, with a glance of contempt.

"I am sure of it," said Rebecca, who had regained her composure. "He has so many plots in hand that he will not be able to guess to which this may refer. The mere uncertainty will bring him here—send it and see."

"Besides," said Sir Charles, "if he do not come you can at once take your own course; if he do we have him in our hands, and can right the wrong without a fearful exposure and scandal. Do you wish the Dale to go down to future Darrells with a stain of blood across its threshold?"

That was conclusive, and the letter was sent.

Leaving the four to wait its result, we will precede it.

We left Reginald Dartmouth in his private room. There he had given the finishing touch to his work of villany.

Now little remained but to reap its fruits.

He had communicated the time of their flight to the countess—he knew that she had understood him, for a messenger had brought an answer of a few words signifying her readiness to carry out his directions.

There he felt himself safe.

With a feeling of triumph and exultation he rose the next morning and after a careful toilet and an elegant breakfast proceeded to give directions to his secretary.

That gentleman he intended leaving behind to conduct his correspondence and inform him of passing events. He thought he could trust him, he had no suspicion, no doubt whatever.

John Stanfield was, as usual, seated at his writing-table.

As usual he gave no acknowledgment of his master's entrance beyond the slight bow.

Reginald Dartmouth stood looking at him for a moment, then said:

"Stanfield, I have some matters of importance to go through with you this morning."

The secretary looked up.

"I am going on the Continent for a short time," continued Reginald Dartmouth, with his languid air. "I am tired of London, bored with England, a trip will do me good."

The secretary, silent still, inclined his head.

"I shall start by to-morrow night's mail."

The secretary gave the slightest start, too slight to be perceptible.

"I wish you to remain here and keep a look-out on things at the Dale—you understand?"

The secretary nodded.

"I may be away some little time, or I may not. At any rate I shall forward you my address in a day or two; that and all other matters you will keep locked up within your own breast."

Again the silent bow.

"I can trust you, I think; you know too well the penalty of unfaithfulness. You will want some money. There is a cheque for a reasonable amount. You can write for more if necessary. But, whatever you write, post the letter yourself, with your own hands. Mark that! Now let me see the letters—the private ones—never mind the others."

He seated himself in the easy-chair and lit his cigar with the air of a man who had little on his mind save the weariness of killing time.

The secretary handed him one letter marked private.

A slight frown contracted Reginald Dartmouth's brow as he took it, and a dark shadow of doubt, hesitation and irresolution made it still heavier as he read the short letter.

"When did this come?" he asked.

"It was delivered an hour ago," was the reply. Reginald Dartmouth rose from the chair and, with the frown still black and heavy, paced the room.

What did it mean? Why could not the old idiot explain or at least give him a hint of the business he deemed so important? What was he to do—only two days clear, and come what would he must start to-morrow night—what was he to do?

At last he decided, and glancing at his watch said:

"Have the goodness to give directions for the immediate saddling of my horse. I am summoned to Dale. Lose not a moment! I must start to-morrow—Stay!" he exclaimed. "Send Philip on to engage post horses at the different stages. I will follow within an hour!"

He turned to leave the room almost before the last words had left his lips or most assuredly would have seen the wonderful expression which lit up the secretary's face.

"An hour!" exclaimed John Stanfield! "Oh, Heaven, be kind and lend me strength of body and mind to keep pace with him. An hour! An hour!"

And with trembling lips and excited eyes the slim, graceful figure of the youth ran with the speed of a fawn down the broad staircase.

(To be continued.)

BENDING THE TWIG.

PROVIDE your young sons with a workshop, or at least a workbench, where they may gratify their longing for tools, and satisfy their restless activity for "something to do." It should be made pleasant, attractive, and comfortable. If room enough, there should be a workbench and vice, a shaving tool, and perhaps a small foot lathe, two or three planes, augers of different sizes, a few chisels, knife, saw and hammer. For those who cannot afford the whole a part would answer, and, to those who can, other tools might be added, the cost of the tools being a trifle compared with the advantages gained, one of which is real progress in a practical education, which is far more valuable to its possessor than mere money.

A young man who can at any time mend sofa, chair, rocker, harness, or tin ware, set the clock, repair an umbrella, whitewash a wall, paper a room, and do a hundred other small jobs, will get through the world far more comfortably and thriftily than one who is constantly obliged to depend on the help of others. Besides all this, and greater still, is the moral influence of tools in furnishing boys something cheerful to do in stormy weather or leisure hours, and thus weakening any temptation to attend those places of diversion which so often lay the foundation of lifelong harm to character.

CHARACTER.

CRIME has always been more or less prevalent since the beginning of the world. Man's natural passions render him pliable to the machinations of the tempter, until, finally overcome, he is led to commit that for which years of expiation cannot atone nor tears can wash away. If we could trace back the road which many a fallen one has travelled, if we could see the temptations which beset his way, the peculiar arts and stratagems sent forth full of enticing attractiveness to lure him from the paths of honour and virtue—if these were all photographed before us, perhaps mercy would oftentimes prove more potent than justice. But the world, utterly oblivious of all this, turns against him; hate and contumely shine forth upon him from the eyes of his fellow-beings; the stain upon his character can never be obliterated, for it is stamped as indelibly as though wrought by letters of fire.

It is the first downward step that pollutes the soul, that taints it with guilt, that bequeaths a legacy of shame and dishonour, that drags it down to infamy's door and leaves it lying on the threshold. It possesses a fountain of knowledge which showers forth defiling waters. It has a secret influence which, when once manifested, comes forth more and more boldly, until, finally, it comes to cast its shadow, and the form is distinctly visible.

In the endangered fortress the armed sentinel keeps watch lest they be surprised by the enemy, but in the dangers and insecurities of life's pathway man oft neglects his defence, and foes, both fierce and strong, storm the garrison until the walls give way, and soon all within is wrecked beyond repair.

There is one weapon which man may wield to shield himself from the enemy's wiles; there is one password which will win an entrance to the camp of elevating intellectual strength; there is one safeguard, one compass, by which to steer life's vessel, and that is—character. Of all the influences capable of directing this one is most powerful, in whose presence even Scorn himself stands abashed, and turns worshipper at the very altar he longs to despoil.

There comes a critical period in a man's life when he may mould his character to evil or to good; to build up or to destroy rests with himself alone. Armed with this mighty defence, he can go forth to meet the shadowy future without trembling; deprived of it, he stands cowering with fear, shrinking to venture lest he rush into a snare prepared by his adversary.

If character is forfeited where can the lost treasure be recovered? Nowhere! never! Once gone it is beyond restoration. Individuals, as well as nations, attest this truth. Character places some on the top, while the lack of it will leave others standing at the bottom of fortune's ever-revolving wheel. It gives a man power in his own hands; he has reliance on his own resources.

To him who guides himself by it it is a chariot of state bearing him on to fame and fortune; but to him who will not regard its precepts it is a car of Juggernaut, crushing him beneath its wheels, without compunction, pity, or remorse.

When character is lost, when honour dies, there

is nothing left. Many have started in life with fair prospects at every turn: prosperity met them, but, having no chart of character to guide, they have finally sunk, and ruin marks the spot where once dignity, energy, skill, nobility, reigned royally triumphant.

Character! It is a word of noble import! It is the nectar of life, the well-spring in the desert, the architect of success, bringing in fresh salubrity day by day. Without it no confidence can be supported, no usefulness can be insured; it draws out every latent virtue, and fans them into a bright and glowing flame.

Character is the rock on which a man can build his dearest hopes, his highest purposes, which no wave can inundate nor wind can overwhelm.

To possess this, then, should be the aim of all who would succeed in life. Live in love of the pure and right, in fear of the false and wrong. Instil into the heart the principles of virtue, temperance, honesty and truth. These qualities combined and adhered to lay the foundation for a character on which no stigma can ever rest. Storms may rage, the sky be overcast, but the star of character shall shine forth more brightly for the transient cloud which dimmed its lustre.

Of glory's immortal tablets there is one waiting for all who will stretch forth the hand and grasp it. It is a living monument. Oblivion shall never shroud its splendour. A flaming sword shall guard it, that future generations may repeat the name recorded there. M. D. H. G.

SILBURY HILL.—Archæologists will be interested, and no doubt pleased, to hear that Sir John Lubbock has just bought Silbury Hill, the grandest tumulus in Great Britain, if not in Europe.

THE CIVIL SERVICE.—It is rumoured that the Lords of the Treasury are about to supplement their recent minute in relation to supplying "official information" to the press by issuing an order prohibiting members of the Civil Service from editing or sub-editing public journals.

THE SHAH'S PIPE.—The bowl of the Shah's pipe is of massive gold, enriched with diamonds; the stem, which is about 33 inches long, is composed of what appears to be a single piece of amber, set with rubies and brilliants, the whole weighing about three pounds.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH.—The marriage of his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh with the Grand Duchess Maria, the daughter of the Emperor and Empress of Russia, has at length been finally arranged. The Duke of Edinburgh arrived at Juggenham and was betrothed to Her Imperial Highness.

THE DOG LICENCE.—A return to Parliament showed that in the year ended the 31st of December last the dog licence duty in Ireland amounted to 29,079*l.* 12*s.*, and of that sum 11,841*l.* was spent in expenses incurred in the administration of the Act. The balance of 17,238*l.* 12*s.* was paid to counties, boroughs, towns, etc. There were 290,796 dogs registered in Ireland last year.

PROPOSED COMMEMORATIVE TOWER AT WHIPPINGHAM.—It is proposed to erect in the parish of Whippingham, Isle of Wight, where the Queen's ma residence is situated, a tower, commemorative of the illness and recovery of the Prince of Wales. Her Majesty has approved the scheme, and above 200 guineas have already been subscribed towards the building.

THE EX-QUEEN OF SPAIN.—On the ex-Queen of Spain's departure from the station of Florence three Irish ladies of the name of MacCullen offered her a bouquet of flowers, and the ex-Queen was graciously pleased to offer them her hand to kiss. Her Majesty had some difficulty in getting into the railway carriage on account of her size, but no one attempted to assist her, Spanish etiquette forbidding any one to touch the Queen.

INTRODUCTION OF EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION INTO PERSIA.—It is evident that the Persian monarch, who has just left our shores, is resolved to do what he can to introduce European civilization into his dominions. Several members of his suite intend to send their sons to England to be educated. A beginning has already been made by His Majesty's Chamberlain, who has left his son under the care of Dr. L. Schmitz, to be educated at the International College at Spring Grove, near Isleworth.

HALL-MARKING OF JEWELLERY.—It having been brought to the knowledge of the council that what is termed "hall-marking" of jewellery and articles of gold and silver is inadequate to secure to the public that protection in the quality of the materials for which it is intended, they have accepted the offer of one of the members, Mr. Streeter, to place 25*l.* at their disposal, to be awarded as a prize for an essay treating on this subject, with suggestions for an improved system.

THE ALBERT MEMORIAL CHAPEL.—Her Majesty

the Queen and the Princess Beatrice, on the 4th ult. visited the Albert Memorial Chapel at Windsor Castle, for the purpose of inspecting Baron Triqueti's statue of the late Prince Consort, which is the crowning work of the costly decorations which adorn the magnificent interior of this interesting building. An inscription, cut into the marble and gilded, runs thus: "Albert, the Prince Consort, born August 26, 1819, died December 14, 1861 Buried in the Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore."

"I have fought the good fight;
I have finished my course."

THE French assert that it is the Shah's intention to take back with him painters, engineers, poets, schoolmasters, merchants, doctors, manufacturers, architects, tradesmen, etc., all French. No other nationality need apply, as he is determined to have the best specimens in each kind, and these, of course, can be found nowhere out of France. Applications are received daily at the Palais Bourbon.

THE BOON OF TRUE SUCCESS.

"WHAT is success?" I asked the sage
Of threescore years and ten,
A man whose hair was white with age,
A leading man 'mong men.

"Is it shown by the warrior's wreath,
The conqueror's envied prize;
By fields of carnage, pain and death,
Beneath the weeping skies?"

The old man, with a smile of love,
And kindness good to see,
First raised his eyes to heaven above,
And then looked full at me,

And said, "My boy, the soldier's plume
In pride hath oft been borne,
Yet it e'er speaks of hate and gloom,
And thousands made to mourn.

"It tells the tale of glory won
With cannon and with sword,
Of many valiant actions done,
And of their high reward;

"But true success it does not show."
The old man paused; then said:
"A symbol 'tis of nations' war,
Of many loved ones dead."

I asked my question o'er and o'er;
At last the sage replied:

"Not in broad lands, nor golden store,
Nor genius glorified,

"Is always found success."—He laid
His wrinkled hand in mine,
And looking kindly at me said
These words, that seemed divine:

"Who wins the love of men, my boy,
Who secures to worship self,
Who fills the downcast heart with joy,
And lives for more than self;

"Who shields the right and conquers sin,
And strives the world to bless,
Heaven's most approving smile shall win,
And this is true success."

C. D.

SCIENCE.

NICKEL facing for printing type is said to be about to come into general use. It is cheaper and much harder than copper, and forms a better surface.

ONE of the most important discoveries in economic geology made during the past year is that of tin in Australia, but the recent discoveries indicate far richer deposits than any before known there.

PRESERVING GRINDSTONES.—Grindstones should not be exposed to the weather, as it not only injures the woodwork, but the sun's rays harden the stone so much as in time to render it useless. Neither should it stand in the water in which it runs, as the part remaining in water softens so much that it wears unequally, and this is a common cause of grindstones becoming "out of true."

VERMILION.—To the uninitiated the manufacture of colour by chemical processes is one of those astounding mysteries which are most entrancing to witness. Take vermilion, for instance. By subjecting a mixture of quicksilver and sulphur, placed in strong retorts, to heat, a combination is formed, which produces a sulphuret of mercury or bright vermilion, in a powder, the shades varying in depth according to the heat.

ARTIFICIAL ALABASTER.—Alabaster ornaments may be imitated by brushing over plaster of Paris models with spermaceti, white wax, or a mixture of the two, or by steeping the models in the warm mix-

ture. Or, instead of this process, they may be brushed over several times with white of egg, allowing each coating sufficient time to dry. Only models made of the finest plaster are suited for these processes.

NEW ENGRAVING PROCESS.—A very novel and curious process of wood-engraving is called the Planotype. The design to be engraved is transferred to a block of lime-tree wood. The block is then placed in a machine resembling an engraving machine, the graver being heated red hot by a gas jet. The design is gradually burned into the wood. Figures or letters of reference are impressed by means of punches. When the red-hot graver has done its work a cast in type metal is taken from the block, which is then used for printing like the ordinary stereotype plate. It is said that the finest details are faithfully produced, and that the practice carried out on a large scale is found to give satisfactory results.

A NEW TORPEDO.—Another new torpedo has just been invented, and steps have been taken for experimenting with the same, with a view to its possible introduction into the service. The inventor is a Mr. Lancaster, and the arrangement by which it is propelled beneath the surface of the water is somewhat similar to that adopted for an ordinary Hale's rocket, the torpedo revolving, owing to screw-like projections, upon its base, being forced round by the combustion of the composition within it, and the backward pressure against the water of the gas in rushing out causing the machine to spring forwards. One of Mr. Lancaster's torpedoes is at present in course of construction in the Laboratory Department at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, and will probably be completed in a short time. Should this new marine monster be finally approved for service it will comprise the fourth in this series of accessories to modern warfare.

BLOOD IN ERYSIPELAS.—On the fourth day of the attack, in a lady suffering from the disease, a small quantity of blood was drawn from the temple which clotted firmly. Serum exuded in large quantities, but presented nothing abnormal; portions of the clot, however, on being carefully teased out and washed exhibited a jointed mycelium which branched out in all directions, and here and there gave off fertile heads. These last divided at the apex into four equal branches, which ran up close together for a distance equal to about four times the diameter of the filament, and were there each intercepted by a joint. At this point they all began to diverge, forming a kind of bell, and sub-divided into four branchlets, each of which terminated in a long moniliform chain of highly transparent refractive spherical spores. Dr. Salisbury ("Zeitschrift für Parasiten Kunde, 1873," Bd. V., pp. 1-5) called this fungus *Pencilium quadridum*.

IMITATION OF MARBLE.—Imitations of marble are in great demand for ornamentation, and many different compounds are used for the purpose. M. Pichler, a gilder in Vienna, from his own experience recommends the following composition as being simple and satisfactory:—Into one pound of best joiners' glue, boiled rather thick, half a pound of resin (copalophony) is to be slowly stirred. (Instead of the resin the same quantity of Venetian turpentine may be used.) Into this plastic mass is worked a mixture of powdered chalk and of any mineral colour of the desired shade, and after the addition of a little olive oil it is ready for moulding. It is sometimes convenient to have the material in the shape of thin sheets, to be cut as required; and, in this case, the mass is rolled out upon a slightly heated plate. M. Pichler asserts that this composition hardens rapidly, and can be easily polished. When kept for a length of time it should be wrapped in a moist sheet and exposed to a gentle heat before using. The variegated marble-like veins can also be produced by kneading together differently coloured portions of this mass.

THE SHAH'S HORSES.—The Persian horses brought from Teheran where inspected in Paris the other day by nearly 200 persons. They were magnificently groomed and caparisoned with gold embroidered Cashmere sheets. The Shah's favourite Persian greyhound Ahmed was greatly admired; but his keeper would not allow him to take bonbons from the visitors. Only a Parisian would think of giving bonbons to a horse.

JEWELS PURCHASED BY THE SHAH.—One of the most famous jewellers of Paris exhibited to the Shah his collection of jewels, and he purchased at the price of 800,000 francs a collar of pearls, and for 85,000 francs a diamond bracelet, which is intended for the wife of Marshal MacMahon. He also purchased many articles for his harem. The Shah tried on the Grand Vizier everything which was shown him—girdles, collars, and aigrettes. He afterwards examined arms of different models, and was about to fire one from the window when he was reminded by the Grand Vizier that he might possibly wound some one. The Shah laughed and put aside the rifle.



[THE SECOND ASKING.]

EDITH LYLE'S SECRET.

By the Author of "Daisy Thornton," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XII.

Love goes towards love, as schoolboys from their books.

Mrs. ROGERS had received a message from her cousin Norah which sent her again to Mrs. Barrett's, when she found that lady more civil than before, and more inclined to let her rooms. Some little hesitancy there was, it is true, with regard to the chamber which had been Edith's, and where she now occasionally spent a night.

"Surely your daughter does not require an extra room," Mrs. Barrett said.

"I prefer that she should have a room to herself," Mrs. Rogers replied. "As I told you before, she is not my child, and I am more particular on that account to bring her up different. She has as good blood in her veins as many a would-be fine lady."

And Mary Rogers's black eyes flashed defiantly at Mrs. Barrett, who gave up the point and prepared Edith's old room for the little Gertie, to whom Mary was as devoted as if she had been a scion of nobility.

If Mrs. Barrett had cared for children she would have been interested in Gertie at once, but as it was she did not notice her particularly till she had been for several days an inmate of the room with the gable window where Edith used to sleep. Then one afternoon, as she sat at her sewing, her ear caught the sound of a sweet voice trilling a little ditty she used to sing to Edith. Something in the tone of the voice arrested her attention, and carried her back to the time when Edith was young and sang that very song.

Moving her chair so that she could command a better view of the back porch where Gertie sat, she noticed for the first time how very pretty she was.

She was rather small for her age, and had such a round, soft, sweet face, with a complexion like wax, and the clearest, sunniest blue eyes, which seemed fairly to dance when she was pleased, and again were so dreamy and indescribably sad in their expression as if the remembrance of some great sorrow were brooding in them. The long, thick eyelashes and heavy arched brows gave them the appearance of being much darker than they really were, and when the lids were raised one was surprised to find them just the colour of the summer sky on a clear, balmy day. But Gertie's hair was her greatest point of beauty, her bright, wavy hair, which in her babyhood must have been almost red, but which now was auburn, with a shading of gold

in it. Taken together, she was a very beautiful child, and one whom strangers always noticed and commented upon, and even Mrs. Barrett, as she sat watching her, felt a sudden throb of interest in her, and thought, it may be, of another little one, who might have called her grandma and made her old age happy.

"Gertie," she said, after a moment, "come here, please. I want to talk with you."

Startled by the voice and a little surprised to be addressed by the cold, quiet woman, who had never before evinced the slightest interest in her, and scarcely spoken to her, Gertie arose, and coming timidly to Mrs. Barrett's side, stood waiting for her to speak.

"Gertie," Mrs. Barrett began, "have you always lived in London?"

"Yes, ma'am, but not with auntie," was Gertie's reply.

And Mrs. Barrett continued:

"With whom then did you live?"

"With my mamma, who died when I was two years old. I do not remember her," was the prompt answer.

And Mrs. Barrett went on:

"Had you no father, then?"

"Why, yes, but—but—"

The child hesitated a little and blushed painfully, then added:

"He didn't like me much I fear, and when the new mother came it was very bad, and so auntie, who isn't my auntie, you know, only she lived there and liked me, took me for her own little girl, and I've been so happy with her, though mamma's house was much bigger and nicer than any we have had since, and there are servants there just as there are at Oakwood, only not so many. But I like living with auntie best."

Mrs. Barrett was interested now, and was about to question the child farther of that home like Oakwood, when Mrs. Rogers appeared and called the girl away.

That afternoon Mrs. Barrett was attacked with a nervous headache to which she was subject, and which to-day was so severe as to send her to her bed, where she lay with her eyes closed, and moaning occasionally, when a light footstep crossed the floor, and a low, sweet voice said:

"You are very ill, aren't you? May I do something for you?"

And before Mrs. Barrett could speak two soft little hands were pressed upon her aching head, which they rubbed and caressed until the throbbing grew fainter and the pain less hard to bear.

Gertie was a natural nurse, and folded up a shawl and put it away and adjusted the shutters to ex-

clude the light and still admit the air, and did it all so quietly and noiselessly that Mrs. Barrett would hardly have known she was there.

"You are very kind," she said, "and I thank you so much, but don't trouble yourself any more. I shall do very well now."

"Oh, I like to take care of you," Gertie answered.

"It's funny, I know, but you see I make believe I am caring for my grandma. I have one somewhere, auntie says, although I never saw her, and I think she don't like me very well."

"Not like you!" Mrs. Barrett exclaimed. "How can she help it?"

"You see she don't know me," Gertie answered.

"If she did maybe she would. Do you like me?"

The question was put timidly and the little face was very grave until the answer came, "Yes, very much," then it flushed all over, and the blue eyes shone like stars while the warm red lips touched Mrs. Barrett's cheek so lovingly, as Gertie exclaimed:

"I am so glad. I want to be liked. I want everybody to like me."

A desire to be loved was a part of Gertie's nature, and with it she seemed to possess the faculty of making everybody love her, even to Mrs. Barrett, who, after that day was exceedingly kind to the little girl and ceased to care because she was an occupant of Edith's room. That there was some history connected with her she was sure, but no questioning on her part availed to elicit any more information than had been volunteered during their first interview. Mrs. Rogers must have cautioned Gertie not to talk of her parents and old home, for she was very reticent, and answered evasively whenever Mrs. Barrett broached the subject to her, as she did once or twice.

"Auntie can tell you," was the reply, when asked where her father had lived, and as Mrs. Barrett did not care to talk to Mrs. Rogers, she knew nothing definite of little Gertie Westbrooke when Edith came to see her and brought news of her rejection of Mr. Schuyler.

By that time there was the best of feeling between Mrs. Barrett and the child, and when the latter passed before the door and went out into the street, the former said so much in her praise that Edith herself was interested, and when her mother said, "I wish you would just go up to her room and see how pretty she has made it," she followed readily up the stairs and stood in the little chamber where Gertie Westbrooke lived, and which bore so many marks of a refined and delicate taste.

A few shells and pictures and books, with ferns and creeping plants, and a pot of flowers, and a dainty little work-box, with a dolly's dress com-

menaced, and dolly herself lying near, while the little white-curtained bed, with its loops of blue ribbon, looked daintily enough to be the couch of a fairy. How pretty it all was, and how vividly it spoke of pure and innocent girlhood, and how fast Edith's breath came for a moment as she stood within the room and thought of her own childhood so very, very far in the past. Why her breath came so hurriedly and the atmosphere of that room oppressed her so much she could not tell, but she charged it to the heat of the August morning as she went down the stairs and out into the street, where she breathed more fully and felt like herself again.

CHAPTER XIII.

When to the seasons of sweet, silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past.
Shakespeare.

"OAKWOOD, May 25th, 18—
"MR. SCHUYLER.—Your sister, Mrs. Sinclair, is very unwell, and desires to see you as soon as possible.

"Respectfully,
EDITH LYLE."
This tiny epistle found Mr. Schuyler in Naples, and brought him back to England at once. During all the winter and the early spring Mrs. Sinclair had been failing, and when May came in the change in her for the worse was so perceptible that she asked Edith to write for her brother, whom she wished to see once more. To Edith the thought of losing her kind mistress was terrible, for, aside from the genuine love she bore the lady, she knew that losing her involved also the loss of the home where she had been so happy, and she dreaded to encounter the curious suspicions she would have to meet alone and unprotected.

"What will you do when I'm gone?" Mrs. Sinclair said to her one day when speaking of her approaching decease, and as Edith made no reply, except to cover her face with her fingers, through which the tears trickled slowly, she went on: "You seem to me like a daughter, and I shrink from the thought of leaving you alone. If it were possible I would make you independent, but at my death the Oakwood property reverts to a nephew of my husband's and I cannot control it. I can, however, do something for you, and will. Edith, I have never mentioned the subject to you before—but, was there not—did not my brother offer himself to you last summer when he was here?"

"Yes," came faintly from Edith.
Mrs. Sinclair continued:
"And you refused him, subject I believe to a reconsideration?"

"I refused him, yes, and with no thought of reconsideration on my part. My decision was final," Edith said.

"It is not for me to dictate in such matters, perhaps," Mrs. Sinclair continued; "but it seems to me you will do well to think of it again should he renew the matter on his return. It is an offer which any woman should consider seriously before rejecting it. I know he can make you happy, and you would far better be his honored wife, even if he is many years your senior, than be cast upon the world with your face and manner as a lure to evil-minded men, who hold a governess as only fair spoil."

"I know it; I know all that, and feel it so keenly," Edith answered, and for an instant there came over her such a feeling of utter loneliness and desolation, and such a shrinking from the future which might be to her what the past had been until she knew Mrs. Sinclair, that she would almost have taken Mr. Schuyler had he been there.

Smothering her sobs and commanding her voice as well as she could, she continued:

"I would rather die than meet again what I have met in the families where I am employed before I knew you, but mother is poor and growing old, and I must do something."

"Why not take the home offered you?" Mrs. Sinclair asked, while Edith sat motionless as a stone, her face as white as ashes, and that horrid sensation in her throat which kept her from uttering a single word.

When at last she could speak she astonished Mrs. Sinclair by falling on her knees beside the bed, and crying out:

"Oh, Mrs. Sinclair, you do not know—you cannot guess what and who I am, or you would know that could never be. Forgive me, I have been an impostor all these years, but now I must speak and tell the whole, and then you shall judge if your proud brother, knowing all, would take me for his bride."

Twenty minutes passed, and there Edith sat, paler and more motionless, if possible, than before, her hands pressed tightly together, and her eyes cast down as if afraid to meet the wondering gaze she knew was fixed upon her.

She had withheld nothing, and Mrs. Sinclair heard the entire story, from the hasty marriage, where Godfrey and his mother were present, up to the day

when the message came that the little baby was dead.

She had been astonished and shocked, and indignant with the mother rather than with the daughter, who, she readily saw, had been only a tool in an ambitious, heartless woman's hands, and whom she could forgive for a deception which had wronged no one, and in which no one but herself was as yet involved.

So, when at last she spoke, her voice was just as kind and gentle as of old, as she said:

"My poor child, you have suffered much, and yours is a strange experience for one so young. Truth is always best and it would have been just as well if it had been confessed at first. I am glad you have told me now; and if my brother asks you again, as I think he will, you must tell him too. It may make a difference with him. I do not know. Certainly it would if withheld till after marriage. That deception he would hardly forgive. Leave me now, please, I am very tired, and you, too, need the open air after your great excitement."

Edith arose to go, when, attracted by a wistful, appealing look in her eyes, Mrs. Sinclair added:

"Come here a moment, please."
Edith went to her, and, drawing her face down to her pillow, Mrs. Sinclair kissed her fondly, and said:

"Rest assured your confession has not changed my opinion of you. I like you too well for that and you are as dear to me now as you were before."

The next day Mr. Schuyler came alone, as Godfrey was in Russia when Edith's letter arrived. But Mrs. Sinclair was too weak to talk. The sudden rupture of a bloodvessel a few hours before her brother's arrival made that impossible, and she could only look her pleasure at her brother's presence.

Three days after she died, with her head on Mr. Schuyler's bosom and Edith kneeling at her side. Just at the last she had taken the girl's hand, and putting it in that of her brother, had whispered, faintly:

"Take care of her, Howard. She is worthy and has been like a daughter to me."

"I will," he answered, emphatically, and his hand closed tightly over that of Edith, who felt as if that hand-clasp bound her to the fate which she had no longer power to resist.

Immediately after the funeral she returned to her mother's cottage, but before she went Mr. Schuyler asked for a private interview, which she granted with a feeling that it was of no use to struggle against what was inevitable. Mr. Schuyler had tried to forget her during his travels; had tried to reason with himself that a poor, unknown girl, who was his sister's hired companion, was not a fitting match for a Schuyler whose first wife had been a Rossiter. But one thought of a beautiful face with the eyes cast down so coyly, and of the sweet voice which had sung to him in the twilight was sufficient to break down every barrier of pride, and make him willing to sacrifice a great deal for the sake of securing her. Godfrey wrote to her occasionally; funny, amusing letters, which she sometimes answered, and as her replies contained news from Oakwood, Godfrey always showed them to his father, who found himself anticipating these short epistles with far more eagerness than Godfrey himself. And so it was that on his return to England he was resolved to renew the offer once made and rejected, and to take no refusal this time. His sister approved his choice, he knew, and had sanctioned it with her dying breath, and thus reassured he went to Edith with a feeling of security as to the result of the interview, which manifested itself somewhat in his manner and made Edith feel more and more how hopeless she was and how certain it was that her secret must be told to him.

"Edith," he began, as he took a seat beside her, "just before I left Oakwood last August, I held a conversation with you which I know you have not forgotten. I asked you to be my wife, and you asked me if I loved you. I could not say yes then, for though I admired and respected and wanted you, I did not experience any of those ecstatic thrills which young people call love. And even now—"

He paused a moment and hesitated, and a warm flush spread itself over his face.

"Even now I may not feel as a younger man would in similar circumstances; but when I tell you that you have scarcely been out of my mind for a moment during my absence, that I have dreamed of you night and day, and that in all the world there is nothing I desire so much as I desire you, I think you will be satisfied that if I do not love you as you have imagined you might be loved, I am in a fair way to do so, if I receive but a little encouragement."

He paused, but Edith did not speak, and sat before him deadly pale, with her long eyelashes cast down and her hands working nervously together.

She knew he was sincere, though his wooing was so different from what Abelard's had been, or what Godfrey's would be when, in his impetuous way, he would have shown his love by kisses and caresses,

and break down every obstacle which stood between him and the object of his desires.

But Godfrey was young, and Abelard had been young, too, and both were different from this cold, proud man of forty, who had unbent his dignity so much, and who seemed so earnest and even tender as he went on to tell her of all she had to gain if she would go with him to the home he would make more beautiful than it already was for her sake.

It was a very pleasant picture he drew of the future, but it did not move Edith one whit, because she felt certain that this life could not be hers if she told him all, as she must surely tell him if he persisted in his suit.

She admitted to him that he was not disagreeable to her, that she found his society pleasant, that she believed him to be a true, sincere man of honour, who would try to make her happy.

And when he asked why she hesitated longer, she opened her lips to tell him why, but the iron fingers were there again, and she could not speak the words.

"I can write them better," she thought, and when she could command her voice, she said to him:

"Give me a few days, a week, in which to think, and then I will write you my decision. I know you honour me, and I thank you for it, and believe you sincere, and for that reason would not for the world deceive you. I have something to tell you which I can better put on paper. Let me go now, for I feel like suffocating."

She spoke slowly and with difficulty, and her face was so pale that Mr. Schuyler felt alarmed lest she should faint, and, passing his arm around her, led her to the balcony and brought her a glass of water, and laid his hand softly on her hair, and seemed so kind and thoughtful that for the first time there awoke in Edith's heart a throb of something like affection for this man who might make her so happy.

"Oh, if I only could forget the past and accept the life offered me," she thought, as an hour later he put her into the carriage which was to take her to her mother's, and then pressing her hand deferentially, said to her:

"I shall await your answer with a great deal of impatience, and shall not consent to receive an unfavourable one."

He lifted his hat and the carriage drove away to where her mother was expecting her.

CHAPTER XIV.

Marriage is a matter of more worth
Than to be dealt in by attorneyship.
Shakespeare.

LITTLE Gertie Westbrooke had gone to the country with Mrs. Rogers for a few weeks, and Edith occupied her old room, and slept in the child's bed, and dreamed strange things which haunted her waking hours and sent her heart back to the little one lost long ago with a yearning such as she had not felt in years. And with this pain, this sense of loss still clinging to her, she sat down one morning and wrote the story of her life, word for word, keeping nothing back, and finishing by saying:

"If, after knowing all this, you still wish me to be your wife, I will not refuse, but will do my duty faithfully, so help me Heaven!"

She showed the letter to her mother, who, finding that it was useless to oppose her daughter, offered to take it to Oakwood herself.

"Better so than to trust it to the post," she said. "Besides it is well for me to be there to answer any questions he may ask, and to take the blame wholly upon myself, as I deserve it."

Edith did not oppose her. She was rather glad than otherwise to have her mother go as a kind mediator between herself and the man whom she began to find it would be a little hard to lose. Accordingly, Mrs. Barrett arrayed herself in her deepest mourning, and, with her thick veil drawn closely over her face, started for Oakwood and asked for Mr. Schuyler. He had passed the four days drearily enough, and in his impatience had more than once resolved to go and claim Edith's answer. But he had promised her not to do so, and he remained at Oakwood in a state of great suspense, until the day when a lady was announced as wishing to see him.

"It surely cannot be Edith," he thought, as he started for the drawing-room, where the closely veiled figure arose and introduced itself as "Mrs. Barrett, mother of Miss Lyle."

Mr. Schuyler was one of the preoccupied kind of men who take little note of what does not directly concern them, and though he must have heard the name of Edith's mother, he had paid no attention to it, or thought it strange that it was not Lyle. Now, however, he noticed it, and, with only a cold bow to the lady, said:

"Barrett? Mrs. Barrett? And you Miss Lyle's mother? How is that?"

"I have been twice married, and my last husband was Dr. Barrett," was the reply, which satisfied the

questioner, who took a seat at some distance from his visitor and waited for her to communicate her business.

Evidently it was a little awkward for her to do so, for she hesitated and fidgeted in her chair and grew very red under her black veil, and wished Mr. Schuyler would not scan her so curiously as he was doing.

At last, with a great effort, she began:

"My daughter has told me all that has passed between you, and I am come with a message from her."

"A message!" Mr. Schuyler repeated, in some surprise; "I supposed she was to write."

He did not like this interference by a third person, and that person a woman whom his sister had described as "pushing and inquisitive," and for whom he had conceived a prejudice without knowing why.

She was very deferential, almost cringing in her manner, and her voice was apologetic in its tone as she replied:

"Yes, I know, she meant to send a letter, and she did commence one yesterday, but grew so nervous over it that she finally gave it up and allowed me to come instead."

Here she stopped a moment and her hands worked together restlessly while Mr. Schuyler, in haste to know the worst, if worst there were, said:

"Well, you are here, then, to say your daughter has refused me?"

As he spoke the words he was conscious of a sharp pang which told him how hard such news would be to bear, and when Mrs. Barrett continued, "No, not to tell you that," the revelation of feeling was so great that, forgetful of his aversion for his prospective mother-in-law, he arose and came near to her, while she continued:

"Her acceptance depends wholly upon yourself, and how you take the story I am here to tell, and which she could not write. Some years ago, when Edith was very young, scarcely fifteen, she fell in love with a well-meaning, good-looking youth, greatly her inferior in the social scale, though perfectly respectable, I believe. Of course, I opposed it, both on account of her extreme youth and because, as the daughter of a clergyman with good family blood, she ought to do better. Without my knowledge, however, they were engaged, and would have been married if he had not suddenly been killed. It was a terrible shock to Edith, and one from which she has never quite recovered."

"You know something of that spasmodic affection of her throat which attacks her at times. It came upon her then, and now when an allusion is made to the violent death of any one, or she is over excited, she experiences the same peculiar sensation, so that I try to keep her as quiet as possible, and when I found that writing to you about it, as she felt she must, was affecting her so much, I persuaded her to desist and let me come instead. She is morbidly conscientious, and would not for the world marry you until you knew all about her past life. She loved the young man with such love as very young girls feel; but that was years ago, and now I do not believe she would marry him if he were living. She bade me tell you everything, and say that if after hearing it you still wished her to be your wife, she would do her best to make you happy, stipulating only that no reference shall ever be made to a past which it is her duty and wish to forget."

Mr. Schuyler was not much given to talking at any time, and he surely had no desire to speak to his fiancée of her dead love. Could he have had his choice in the matter there should have been no dead love between himself and Edith, but when he reflected that he could not offer his first affection, for that was buried in Emily's grave, he felt that it was not for him to object to this poor, unknown youth who had been obliging enough to die and leave Edith free.

A few times he walked up and down the room, then, stopping suddenly before the anxious woman, he said:

"Your daughter once hinted to me there was something she must tell me, and as I knew her life must have been as pure and innocent as a babe's, I supposed it was a matter of this kind, and am prepared to overlook it, though of course I would rather have been the first to move her maiden heart. I will write her a few lines if you will wait here, and this afternoon or evening I shall see her."

He bowed himself from the room, leaving Mrs. Barrett in a state of fearful suspense as to what he might write to Edith, and whether her wicked duplicity would at once be discovered.

In her desire for Edith's advancement she was willing to do anything, and the slight put upon herself was nothing to her now. She would rather have gone with Edith to her beautiful home if she could, but as she could not, she accepted the condition, and was just as eager for Edith to accept Mr. Schuyler as if she too were to share in the greatness. With Edith she felt almost certain that a full confession of the past would at once end everything, for Mr.

Schuyler would hardly marry the widow of one of his workmen, and she resolved that he should not know it, at least not in time to prevent the marriage.

With Edith his wife he could not help himself, and would make the best of it if by chance it came to his knowledge, she reasoned, and when she started for Oakwood with Edith's letter it was with no intention of giving it to him. She knew just what she would say to him, and she said it, and then waited the result.

Fifteen minutes went by and then he came back to her, and, handing her a note, said:

"This is my message to Miss Lyle. I shall see her this evening and arrange our plans."

Then he meant to go on with it, and Mrs. Barrett could almost have fallen at his feet and thanked him for raising her daughter to the position she had sinned so greatly to secure for her, but his proud, cold manner kept her quiet, and she only said, as she took the offered note:

"Thank you, sir; and please remember not to allude to the past, when you see her. She wished that particularly—it excites her so."

"I shall be careful on that point," he said, and with another grave, cool bow he dismissed her from the room, wondering why he breathed so much freer with that woman gone, and what it was about her which affected him so unpleasantly.

"I know Edith is not like her in the least," he said, "and I will take care to remove her from that influence as soon as possible. Two weeks will not be too soon for our marriage, then I shall be done with Mrs. Barrett for ever."

Meantime Mrs. Barrett was walking slowly along the road which led to London, congratulating herself upon the good luck which had not dried the seal of the note Mr. Schuyler gave her. Had it been otherwise she would have opened it all the same, but the evil one, whose servant she certainly was, was playing into her hands, and the envelope held together so slightly that she opened it with perfect ease, and taking out the letter, read it through with an immense amount of satisfaction, and saw that she could show it to her daughter and not betray herself.

The letter ran thus:

"MY DEAR EDITH.—Do not think I prize you less on account of anything in the past, though of course I would rather that past had never been, but it is not for me who have loved and lost a wife to object because of your lost love, whose tragical death affected you so strangely. I trust you will overcome that difficulty in time, and be assured, that both for your sake and my own, I shall never in any way allude to it, nor is it necessary that I should do so. You have been frank and truthful with me, and I thank you for it, and value you all the more. Had it come to me later I might have found it harder to overlook than I do now. You were very young and your concealment from your mother is all I can see for which to blame you in the least. Dear Edith, let it all be as if it never had been, and consent to be my wife. I want you more than ever, and I cannot give you up for a trifle. I will see you to-night and arrange for the wedding, which must take place at once, as I have already been absent too long from home, where I am needed so much, and where there will be a warm welcome for you."

"Good-bye, darling, till to-night."

"Yours, for ever,

"HOWARD SCHUYLER."

Had there been anything in this letter to awaken a suspicion in Edith's mind of foul play on the part of her mother, Mrs. Barrett would have unhesitatingly withheld it from her and palmed off some story of her own. But there was nothing, and she hastened home to Edith, whom she found sitting listlessly in her room with Gertrude Westbrook's things everywhere around her, and a look of apathy upon her face, as if she were fully assured of the nature of her mother's tidings. She knew Mr. Schuyler could not forgive, and now that the die was cast, and her chance for something better than a governess's life lost for ever, as she believed, she was conscious of a feeling of pain and weariness, and her heart cried out for what she must not have.

As her mother entered the room she lifted her eyes languidly, but said nothing until she had read the letter which changed her whole future, and made her pulse quicken with a new hope and a restful feeling she had not known for years.

"What did he say to you?" she asked. "Did you talk with him? Tell me all about it, please."

And Mrs. Barrett told her just what it seemed best to tell, and said she had talked with him and taken the blame upon herself for the secrecy since Abelard's death, and that though he was, of course, surprised and shocked, he soon recovered himself, and showed how much he was in love by his readiness to forgive and let the past fade into oblivion.

Mrs. Barrett professed to be a zealous Christian woman, and the few who knew her in London esteemed her as a saint, so rigidly did she observe

every outward form of worship; but where her daughter was concerned the evil one had her in his keeping and put into her mouth the thing she was to say, and made her say it with a readiness which sometimes surprised and even troubled herself.

But she had gone too far to think of looking back until Edith's marriage was a sure thing. Then she meant to reform, and be ever after the mirror of truth itself. Now, however, it was for her interest to prevent any communication of the past between Mr. Schuyler and Edith, and so she said:

"Oh, one thing more I must tell you. Possibly Mr. Schuyler may have said something of the kind in his letter to you. He is quite averse to any allusions to the past as you can be, and said distinctly that he did not wish you to mention the subject to him. He is satisfied, and that is enough."

Edith did not reply.

She was reading the note again, and feeling a little hurt and disappointed that no direct mention had been made of Abelard.

"He might at least have been generous enough to say how grateful he was to him for having saved Godfrey's life," she said to her mother.

Mrs. Barrett answered at once:

"He did say all that to me, and spoke very feelingly of him, and was glad he honoured his memory as he did; but you know how proud he is and must understand that it would grate upon his pride to think his bride-elect had been the wife of his servant. I think myself it would be bad taste in him to go lauding the dead husband of the woman he seeks to make his wife. You surely have no desire to praise the late Emily Schuyler, or even to talk of her, and you must give him the same liberty of reticence."

Edith was silenced and satisfied. If Mr. Schuyler had praised her husband to her mother, that was surely enough, and she appreciated the motives which kept him silent to her, and as the day wore on there crept into her heart a feeling of rest and content and satisfaction which she had never known before. Mr. Schuyler was a man whom she thoroughly respected and liked, and whom in time she might learn to love if she could overcome the feeling of fear or awe with which his presence inspired her. She knew he would try to make her happy and she more than once found herself thinking with pleasing anticipations of the beautiful home and the new life awaiting her. Never since the days when she arrayed herself for the coming of Abelard had she felt as much real interest in her dress as she did now when making herself ready for her lover. Choosing a pretty robe of white which had been made in Paris, she fastened a knot of lavender ribbon at her throat, and placing a white rose in her hair, was ready for him when he came full half an hour earlier than the time appointed. His wooing of Emily Rosseter had been a formal affair; his second love-making was formal, too, as became the man. Still there was in his manner genuine kindness, and even tenderness, as she took Edith's hands in his and said:

"Are these dear little hands mine?"

"Yes, if you still wish to have them," Edith answered.

And then he actually bent down and kissed them very devoutly, as if fearful lest his breath should blow them away.

This was a great advance on his manner with Emily.

To her he had more fully said: "This little hand is mine," and had put it repeatedly back into her lap, reserving his right to kiss her until she was his wife, while in Edith's case he kissed the hands he had claimed as his, and held them in his own a little awkwardly, it is true, as if he did not quite know what he was doing, but still held them and looked at them, and turned them over, and thought how shapely and pretty and white they were, and how they would be improved with the jewels he meant to put upon them. And she would be improved, too, with the rich apparel he would give her, and his heart began to swell with pride as he saw in his home, and at his table, and in society, the beautiful bride, who was sure to be a success.

And as he talked to her, and watched the colour mount into her cheeks, and saw the coy drooping of her eyes, and felt her warm breath upon his face, he was conscious of being moved as he had never been moved before by love for womankind, and his words and tones were almost loverlike as he sat with her hand still in his, and talked of the future and all he meant to do to make her happy.

And only once was there the slightest allusion to the past, and then Edith said to him, looking him full in the face:

"And are you sure that you do not mind the past which has made me so unhappy?"

"Mind it, no. I told you as much in my letter. That is all gone by. Don't let us mention it now or ever."

That was all he said, and as he said it he wound his arm around Edith, who felt that she might in-

deed forget the past, and take the good offered to her in the new life coming.

It was late when Mr. Schuyler left her that night, and before he went he had arranged everything with that care and precision which marked all his actions. They were to be married very quietly within the next three weeks, and then, after a short bridal trip, proceed to Oakwood. The bridal outfit would come from Paris, whither he would forward his order the next day. He would also write at once to Godfrey, who would join them in time to be present at the ceremony. There were to be no invited guests, and only a simple breakfast at Oakwood. The heir was there now, it was true, but he had offered the hospitality of the house to Mr. Schuyler for as long a time as he chose to accept it, and when told of the projected marriage, had asked the privilege of furnishing the breakfast.

Thus, everything was fixed, and Edith, who had cared and thought for herself so long, was glad to leave everything to Mr. Schuyler and let him plan and think for her.

She was beginning to like him very much, and when next day he brought her the engagement ring, and she saw the superb diamond flashing on her finger, she felt a throb of pride and quiet exultation that at last the ease and luxury which her fine tastes fitted her to appreciate and enjoy, were to be hers without stint or limit. That morning, too, a French modiste came and took her measure for the outfit, and when the second night of her betrothal closed in, the order was on its way to Paris for "an entire outfit for a young bride whose wealth would warrant any expenditure."

(To be continued.)

MARRIED IN MASK.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHEN the chief of the Provveditori spoke these thrilling words "She is dead!" the heart of the banker became as ice within his bosom.

Al! well might it be so, for are there in the whole range of human agonies words which fall more solemnly than these "She is dead"? Then there are no more opportunities to beg for pardon. The last chance has fled. There is no more hope. The eyes are closed in everlasting sleep. The lips will never move again. The ear can no longer hear the cry for mercy. Heaven has called her. Alas! she is dead. And she died estranged from him and deserted by him. And she was innocent.

No tongue can depict the agony of the gray-haired man. He bowed his head upon the table, and he passed through convulsions terrible as death. He had carried the burden of her memory through a long life. That memory was a daily torture, and yet he could not shake it off. It whispered to him in the pauses of business. It sighed to him in the night watches. So loved and yet so false. He courted oblivion. It would not come to him. Love had taken deep root. He threw away the plant and fled from it. Alas! the fragments of the root were in his heart, and from them fresh shoots grew daily to torment him. He hated all women because she had been so lovely, and fascinating, and false. But now a fearful revulsion had come upon his life. She had been innocent and he false. Her sweet face had looked out on the evening stars which glistened above Venice as she loved him and prayed for his return. The devoted woman had doubtless lived a life of anguish, and then faced the death-angel with a pang at her heart that she could not die in the arms of her husband. Then came the terrible words of the brother upon his ears.

The Italian leaned over the bowed form of the banker and said to him, in profound sympathy:

"She died blessing you, and with the most fervent words of affection upon her lips. 'Search the world for him,' she said, 'and when you have found him tell him that I never for an instant ceased to love him. Wherever you find him tell him to live a good life, and he will yet clasp me in his arms in Heaven.'"

This was too much for the broken-hearted man, and he moaned aloud.

The lawyer passed into the adjoining room that the sacred scene might be witnessed by the brother alone.

The Italian chief, full of reverence for the man who had once suffered for his beloved Italy, laid his hand affectionately upon the arm of the banker, and slowly, in the intervals of agony, detailed to him the history of the deserted wife.

"She died," he said, "shortly after her child was born. She said to me, 'Bring my baby to him if you ever find him, and when he looks upon its eyes he will love me again.'"

Nicholas Rudd started up at those words, and a gleam of tenderness shot across his features as he said:

"Heaven is good if it has spared that child to me!

Where is it? What is it? Oh! is a star of hope left to me yet? My life is so dark!—so dark!"

"Her child was a son," said the comforter. "He lives to speak for his mother whenever you look upon his eyes. You can do much for him. He is now in prison. Sam is your own son, and the son of the angel who is watching you now from Heaven. Listen to the story of a lost child: When she was dead I confided her child to the custody of a woman who had long been a nurse in the family. After I was summoned away from Venice to the army of Italy this nurse was directed by her physician to visit the island of Sicily for her health. She informed me, upon my return, that the child had been stolen from her there, as he played upon the beach, by a party of sailors who landed from a small boat. They carried off the little boy in spite of her remonstrances, and notwithstanding she sent a boat of armed men after them. The kidnappers reached their ship, which spread its wings and sped away, leaving the enraged Italians far behind.

"Upon my coming to this city I encountered a lad whose eyes so closely resembled mine as to attract universal attention. I saw in them my dead sister once more. I could not believe that so good fortune had really greeted me in this land on the first day of my arrival as meeting the lost son of my sister. But the nurse had pointed out to me marks upon the baby's arm exactly similar to those the Austrian tyrants had printed upon your arms in the torture chamber. You will never forget the marks left upon you by the fire jets. They are upon your arms now. Upon the arms of the boy Sam I found at last exactly the birthmarks the nurse had pointed out to me. Consider this coincidence in connection with the resemblance to my sister, and the evident Italian blood in Sam, and the nationality of the vessel which carried the boy away from the nurse, and you cannot fail to reach my conclusion that Heaven has sent to you mysteriously the child of the woman who loved you."

"I believe it," said Nicholas Rudd, earnestly. "I loved the poor boy for his resemblance to my wife. From the first moment I looked upon him I was drawn toward him by a mysterious charm. She was ever looking at me from his beautiful eyes; and from gazing upon them I was gradually, year by year, softening toward her who had wronged me. I fancied, too, that I saw in him certain resemblances to myself. Now I know it. From anger and hatred you have converted me to remorse. Oh! what can I do to save Sam?"

"Do what the eminent lawyer in the next room advises you to do. Permit him to introduce a female friend here to play the part of your son's wife. Concentrate the attention of the public and the reporters upon the sham wife, to enable us to get Bessie's testimony in court without suspicion or opposition."

"Anything, anything to save my son," exclaimed the banker. "Summon the lawyer, and tell him to pursue his own course. He may do with my house what he likes."

After a brief interview the lawyer left the house hopeful of the result of the stratagem. He had summoned the servants to the room of Nicholas Rudd, and demanded of them respectively what they would do to save the life of their master's son. Each one had declared himself ready to assist in a deception so simple as keeping the mouth shut regarding the sham wife who was to be introduced into the mansion.

After the lawyer had departed the banker ordered his carriage and drove away with his brother-in-law to the prison, to reveal to Sam the reasons the two had for believing that he was the real son of Nicholas Rudd.

A few days after the startling events which had uprooted the prejudices of the great banker the bell of his mansion gave notice that a visitor sought admission. He gave to the servant his card, which was taken to the room of Mrs. Rudd. The lady read the name of "A. S. Stevens, reporter," smiled, and directed the servant to say that she would meet the gentleman in a few minutes.

When she descended the great stairs to the drawing-room it was with no elastic step. Wearily she passed into the room as if the burden of many griefs had broken her.

The apartment was darkened, but it was evident to the reporter that she was very beautiful, very pale, and very sad. She dropped into a chair near him, and said, gloomily:

"Several other gentlemen connected with the press have called to see me. I really think some of them sympathize with my hard lot."

"I know, madam," said the reporter, "from reading yesterday's paper that gentlemen of our profession have been received and courteously treated here. Hence my call. The public are extremely interested in the fate of your husband. If you have

anything new to intrust to me regarding his case, which is proper for publication, I should be pleased to be the medium through which the public receives it."

"You know," she said, "that one paper has published an article calculated to prejudice the public against my husband. I allude to the statements made that he was a very desperate and unprincipled character when he was a boy."

"I know, I know," said the reporter. "But have you any fact that will enable me to contradict that article?"

"Yes," she said, "I have. A very respectable man called here to see me. He has accumulated considerable property in business, and calls himself Mr. Pup. He was the companion of my husband when they were homeless boys together. By their own industry and perseverance they have both raised themselves from vagrancy to respectability. Mr. Pup says that Sam was the bravest and best-hearted boy that ever lived. He fought for the weak and helpless against immense odds. He was ignorant of his father and mother, but when he first learned that theft and vagrancy were wrong he turned to the right and has followed it ever since. Mr. Pup says that he adopted a little girl who was homeless and provided for her like a father."

"And what was her name?" inquired the reporter, eagerly.

"Bessie, a little orphan."

"And where is she now?" he asked.

"We can't find out where she is. My husband says that if we can find her she will prove that he did not commit murder."

"Ah, and is there no clue by which the prisoner's friends can find her?"

"Not the slightest," she said.

"Good-day, madam," he said, rising to depart.

"I thank you."

After he had left the house he said to himself:

"And so none of the family know where Bessie is. I am foiled again, by Jingo." The reporter was Pryor in disguise.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE court was densely crowded, but a wonderful silence fell upon the scene. All leaned forward in intense interest to catch the words of the witness.

This question had been propounded to him: "Did you see the boy, Sam, strike the woman with a weapon?"

The witness hesitated, then he said:

"He struck her in the neck with something that I couldn't see. I was looking through the window and I saw the blood spirt out from her neck."

"What do you think the weapon was that caused the flow of blood?"

"I couldn't say. It must have been something very slender and very sharp. It made a very little hole."

"If you couldn't tell at the distance you stood from Sam what weapon he had in his hand, how could you know that it made a very little hole?"

"Oh, I saw the hole after she was dead, when the people came in and found her. I couldn't tell the size of the hole till then."

"Now tell me in what position the woman was when Sam struck this blow, and what she was doing at the time of receiving it!"

"She was sitting at a table with her back to the window, when I was looking in. She was sitting still and seemed to be thinking. The boy came up slyly behind her and struck right at her neck."

"Do you think they were quarrelling at the time, having high words or anything like that, which would provoke an attack upon her?"

"No. She was sitting still and he was not talking. At least I don't think he was."

"You think he struck then in cold blood?"

"I do."

A murmur ran through the court.

"Did you see any one inside the house beside Sam and the woman at the time the fatal blow was struck?"

"No."

"Do you know of any motive the boy could have in killing her?"

"They used to fight sometimes, and I heard him say once, after a fight, that if she struck him another time he would fix her."

Upon being cross-examined this witness was asked the following question:

"What did Sam and the woman generally fight about?"

"She used to beat children, and the boy took their part."

"Did she punish them more than was necessary?"

"Well, yes; I think she did."

A slight revulsion of feeling came upon the audience, as was manifest from the murmur which ran around the court.

"Did you ever see her beat a little girl?"
 "I did."
 "What was her name?"
 "Bessie."
 "Was that her only name?"
 "I never heard her called by any other name."
 "Where did she live?"
 "With Red Eyed Mag."
 "Was she the child's mother?"
 "No."
 "Do you mean that she kidnapped the little girl?"
 "Yes."

"When you saw this kidnapper beat Bessie did you think the child was receiving too much punishment?"

"Well, yes, I thought so."
 "What kind of a rod or article did the woman beat her with?"

"A horsewhip."
 "What kind of marks were left on the child after the whipping?"

"Some were black and blue marks, and some were blood marks."

A shiver ran through many spectators, and the brother of the murdered woman, who had purchased this witness's testimony with money, scowled at him across the court. Old Hawk, who was sitting near Joseph Travers, the lawyer who had propounded the last interrogatory, saw this scowl and whispered to the counsel:

"Don't ask this fellow any more questions. Her brother has scowled at him, and he will swear nothing but falsehoods now to make up for the trap you led him into."

"You keep still a moment," whispered back the lawyer. "You are right, but I must link in the testimony and then I'll drop him."

"Now, witness," said the lawyer, "you seem to be a straightforward and upright man. I won't keep you here but for a moment longer. Answer me this question:

"When you saw the woman make these marks on Bessie did you see Sam interfere?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, describe that interference."

"The boy jumped upon the woman's back and put his arms so tight around her neck that he most choked her, so that they both fell to the floor."

"Did that stop the woman's attack on Bessie?"

"Yes. Then she turned to and thrashed Sam with the whip."

"That will do, witness. You may go."

The perjurer, whose testimony was thus concluded, had been one of the gang who had arrayed himself against Old Hawk and his associates. He had been heavily bribed to swear that he witnessed the killing.

The effect his testimony had thus far produced upon the jury may be summed up in these words: Sam killed the woman in cold blood when she was unsuspecting and helpless. His motive was the punishment she had given him on former occasions for interfering with her cruelties. She was naturally cruel. Sam was the reverse.

Then a policeman was called to the witness-box.

He swore that on the night of the murder he saw Sam, in the same street in which the hut stood, carrying off a little girl in his arms. He identified the prisoner as that boy.

The prisoner's counsel did not cross-examine this witness. His testimony chimed in with the other evidence favourable to Sam which it was hoped might be produced in court.

Finally Mr. Travers called a witness who was the prisoner's friend.

Mr. Pup was sworn.

His name as he gave it elicited some surprise. The old captain of the boys, finding in his mature years that a full name was desirable in business, had simply doubled the name which had attached to him for so many years, and signed himself "Pup Pup." He maintained that if Pup meant a young dog, two Pups must be equal to a full growth, or an adult dog.

So Mr. Pup Pup took the oath, and became the cynosure for all eyes in that crowded court.

It was a scene of intense interest that criminal trial.

There sat the prisoner—beautiful as Adonis—who had, by his integrity and industry, elevated himself from the companionship of criminals and vagrants to a partnership in one of the greatest business houses of the metropolis.

There were many in that audience who had struggled up from poverty to honourable positions. To them it seemed hard that the noble-looking young banker should be hurled from his high estate to a dishonourable grave.

Beside him sat the great and venerable banker, the owner and creator of millions, who had recognized the poor boy's sterling qualities, and finally given

him the position of partner and son. He was very venerable, and men pitied him if he had indeed committed so grave an error of judgment as to aid one with a criminal's heart.

And there sat the wife, closely veiled and near the prisoner.

The newspapers had been full of paragraphs regarding her marvellous resuscitation from death. She had gone on her bridal night, this mysterious bride, to the edge, the boundary of the spirit land. Perhaps she had even been granted a glimpse into that land, the bodies of whose inhabitants cast no shadows. How eagerly men, women, and children in that court contemplated her figure, and hoped she would yet unveil.

And near the wife sat the aged and venerable physician (or magician) from Italy, who had confounded the scientific men of his profession, and said to the dead bride, "Awake!"

The court was full of sensations. But none of them caused a greater thrill in all hearts than the rumour which the crafty Travers, the orator and criminal lawyer, had caused to be circulated—that they were searching the city for one witness who could save the prisoner's life. It was whispered about that there were great hopes entertained of finding this witness before it was too late.

But all eyes were centred now upon the young man, who was expected to say something favourable to the prisoner.

He was the owner of several vans, and was said to have wrestled with poverty and vice, and come off victor. He was another reclaimed boy from the dregs of society.

The preliminary interrogatories were listened to in silence.

But after a time a question was propounded by Mr. Travers which caused the audience absolutely to hold their breath.

It was this:

"After the boy, Sam, brought the little girl in his arms through the storm, and put her under the shelter of your cave, did you notice anything peculiar about her?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Describe that peculiarity to the court and jury."

"The poor little thing had red marks across her face and neck just as if somebody had laid a whip across them. Then her fingers had been whipped so that they were all bleeding."

"You don't know that she had been whipped?"

"Yes, I do know it, because Sam told me that Red Eyed Mag had whipped her that very night, and Sam never spoke falsely."

"Did you do anything to help her?"

"No, but Sam did. He put sardine oil on the wounds."

"I object, my lord," interposed the prosecuting attorney, "to all these details of unimportant matters which happened after the murder."

"What is your object in propounding this class of questions, Mr. Travers?" inquired the presiding judge.

"They are at an end now," said the counsel for the prisoner. "I wish by them to strengthen the testimony of the witness who, thank Heaven! I now see entering the court, and who is our chief reliance to prove that this wicked woman was killed in self-defence. Here comes our long-lost witness."

The excitement was intense. People arose to their feet and gazed in the direction the lawyer pointed. Officers of the court were trying to clear the way for the long-expected individual who was to save a human life.

Who is it? What is it? Is it that man? Is it a woman? These questions were whispered on every side. Few could see the approaching witness, so crowded was the court.

Finally the officers forced their way to the front, and conducted the witness to the witness-box where she was to be sworn.

"Is Bessie the only name that you have?" said the judge to her.

The name thrilled through the crowd. They knew then that the little girl, who had been the subject of Red Eyed Mag's cruelty, was before them in the person of the lovely young woman who was about to testify.

All noted her rare beauty and grace. She had laid aside her bonnet, and her abundant mass of brown hair was manifest. She had been warned before her coming that this question would be asked her. So she looked at the prisoner, and then pointed to him saying:

"He can tell better than I can if I had any other name than Bessie when I fell into his hands. The first people I can remember as a little girl were Sam and Red Eyed Mag. I remember him because he was kind to me. Sam always said that he did not know who my parents were, and that my only name was Bessie. He said I called myself by that name

when Red Eyed Mag stole me. So I don't see how I can answer the question. I am Bessie. But I don't know the name of my father."

Then the judge directed that she be sworn as "Bessie, name of her father being unknown." She accordingly took the oath and was examined. She stated the street and number of the confectionery establishment where she resided and worked.

Her appearance seemed to surprise the counsel for the Crown.

He sat watching her lovely face and easy manners, which had a charm indeed for all present. He had doubts in his mind as to her identity with the Bessie who had been beaten by the woman. He looked around for the witness who had testified so strongly against the prisoner, to ask his opinion upon the subject.

But the man had left the court temporarily under the escort of Old Hawk, who had pounced upon him immediately after his testimony was closed.

There was no alternative therefore but to watch the girl, and if she was assuming the character of Bessie she would entangle herself in some inconsistencies or mistakes which would expose her to the court.

She stated that she knew the prisoner to be the same person who had been known to her in childhood.

Finally, the prisoner's counsel said to her:

"Did you know anything about the crime with which the prisoner is charged at the time when it was committed?"

"I did."

"How old were you at the time?"

"I don't know."

"How old are you now?"

"I don't know. I never had any one to tell me my age to begin with, so I have not been able to tell how old I am from my childhood up. I can only surmise about how old I am from the opinions of people who talk to me about my personal appearance and probable age."

"Have you a good memory?"

"Yes, an excellent memory."

"What is the earliest event in your life that you can remember?"

"I remember that I was a little girl about as high as the table, and a tall woman, Red-Eyed Mag they called her, stood on the opposite side of the table and struck me with a whip across it, so hard on my head that I fell down, and the table shielded me from her."

"What next do you remember?"

"I remember that one day I tried to run out of her house and she followed me with a whip and struck me till I fell down. Then everything grew dark. When the light came back my head felt sore, and I saw that Sam, the prisoner, had me in his arms, and was putting something on my head which soon made it feel better. He seemed to me like an angel who had just come, and that is the first I remember of seeing him."

"Do you remember him as a familiar or prominent face in those early days?"

"Yes. When I look back to that early time two faces haunt me, and two only. One is Sam and one is Red Eyed Mag."

"Do you remember distinctly the killing of Red Eyed Mag?"

"I do. It printed itself on my mind in such characters of terror, and so engrossed my whole being, that I see it to-day as plainly as I see this crowded court scene."

"Then relate to the court and jury how it occurred, and in your own language and way."

There was a breathless silence in the court as Bessie began to narrate her early history.

(To be continued).

He is good that does good to others. If he suffers for the good he does he is better still, and if he suffers from them to whom he did the good he is arrived to that height of goodness that nothing but an increase of his sufferings can add to it; virtue is at its summit—heroism is complete.

THE TRUE WOMAN.—The true woman, for whose ambition a husband's love and her children's adoration are sufficient, who applies her military instincts to the discipline of her household, and whose legislative faculties exercise themselves in making laws for her nurse, whose heart asks no other honour than his love and admiration; a woman who does not think it a weakness to attend to her toilet, and who does not disdain to be beautiful, who believes in the virtue of glossy hair and well-fitting dresses, and who eschews rents and ravelled edges, slipshod shoes and audacious makeups; a woman who speaks low, and does not speak much, who is patient and gentle, intellectual and industrious, who loves more than she reasons and yet does not love blindly, who

never scolds and rarely argues, but adjusts with a smile; such a woman is the wife we all dreamed of once in our lives—away in the distance!

THE JEWELLER OF FRANKFORT.

CHAPTER XIII.

SOME time after these occurrences a well-dressed man was seated one morning in a saloon. His chair was near a window opening on the street, and a half-blind screened those from the public view. The slats of this blind being moveable, he could, if he chose, see whatever was passing outside without being himself visible. This he did, and for a time amused himself by scanning the carriages and pedestrians who went past in a ceaseless tide.

Then he raised his eyes to the opposite house, a neat, three-storey brick building with a shop in front.

Why did the man utter an exclamation of surprise? Because he was Cesar Bastian, and because over the door of the shop he read in large gilt letters on the sign:

"Nicolaus Steinberg, Jeweller und Uhrmacher." (Jeweller and Watchmaker.)

There might be two Nicolaus Steinbergs in the world—the name was not an uncommon one—but this was the identical sign which Bastian had seen over the jeweller's shop in Frankfort-on-the-Main. There were other and smaller signs indicating the business, freshly painted and gilt, but this one was weather-stained and tarnished. It was the same—there could be no doubt of it.

At first the discovery alarmed him. But, on reflection, he saw that there was no ground for apprehension. The jeweller did not know him, his wife was, he believed, in his power, and Claudine, if still in the family, was his ally. Again his whole personal appearance had undergone a change, both natural and artificial, since he was in Germany, and even later still, since he had emerged from the "dive" in Baxter Street. Of course he was ignorant of the fact that he had been secretly photographed at Mainz, and that his portrait was in the possession of the Steinberg family. On the whole, he was rather glad to find that the jeweller had emigrated.

He sat watching the house till he saw a young lady, fashionably dressed, come out of the front door. Could it be possible that superb young woman was Claudine? If so, she had developed into a splendid creature—her form rounded, her cheeks glowing with health, and she moved with the dignity and grace of a duchess. As she drew on a delicate kid glove he noticed that she wore diamond rings, which sparkled in the sunlight. Not positively certain, however, that it was Claudine, he resolved to follow her, to keep her in sight, and, if his doubts were resolved on a closer inspection, to accost her.

He left the saloon, and walked on the opposite side of the street to the young lady, not losing sight of her an instant.

Presently she happened to drop her lace handkerchief, without noticing it.

Bastian, who was close behind her, picked it up and read the embroidered initials in the corner—C. D.

There was no longer a doubt of her identity. He touched her on the arm and said, politely: "Madam, I think this is your handkerchief." She turned to take it and thank him. At the first glance she did not recognize him.

"I think we have met before," he said, speaking in French.

The tone of his voice rather than his features arrested her attention.

She gazed fixedly upon him and the colour left her cheeks and lips.

Those white lips moved, but the word "Bastian" was a scarcely audible whisper.

Bastian placed his finger on his lips.

"Beware," he said, in a low tone. "Don't breathe that word aloud. The man you are thinking of lies in the bottom of the sea—so far as the world knows. I must speak with you in some place where we are secure from observers and auditors. Go on—I will follow you."

With her old habit of obedience to the man's commands she went on.

Without turning her head she felt that he was close behind her.

The place at this hour of the morning was secluded enough.

They sat down on a rustic seat under the shadow of some tall ash trees.

"You are like one risen from the dead," said Claudine, in a low voice. "I thought there was only one survivor of the 'Snow Cloud.'"

"There was only one—but I happened to cross in the 'Allemanin.'"

"And the children?"

"What children?"

"Minna and Caspar."

"How did you know I had charge of them?"

"I know that Carl Wolff had charge of them—and I knew that Carl Wolff was an alias of Cesar Bastian."

"How did you know that?" asked Cesar, in the greatest astonishment.

"Because in the photograph of Carl Wolff, which Christian sent to Liada Steinberg, I recognized your features."

"I never sat for a likeness in my life."

"Not consciously. You were too wary for that." And Claudine related the strategy by which the old wine-merchant of Mainz had obtained the pictures.

"Then it won't do for me to see Madame Steinberg. She would demand an account of her children."

"And where are they? Have you—"

"I don't know where they are," he interrupted, speaking uneasily.

"I think I can guess," the girl said, with a shudder. "They escaped the perils of the ocean to find another grave!"

"By Heaven! you wrong me," cried Bastian. "I couldn't do that. I can't live without sleep, and if I had done what you suspect I should never have closed my eyes in peaceful slumber."

"Time was when you were not so very scrupulous."

"Beware!" said Bastian, with a blanched face.

"Let the dead rest."

"Do the dead always rest?" she asked.

"No—they rise again. Oceans of drink will not drown them. I have tried that recipe. You don't know what it is to have an old man's white face, with the eyes wide open, staring at you in the middle of the night. He brought it on himself though—he loved his gold better than his life. Speak no more of it."

"But you haven't told me where the boy and girl are yet."

"Because I can't tell you. They have run away from me and I cannot find the faintest trace of them. I thought I had them safe under my thumb—but the birds have flown."

"Why did you not send them to their father and mother?"

"I had my reasons—and they were these—if you must know them—I had robbed them—I had beaten the girl and maltreated the boy and made an enemy of him. The whelp and I had a falling out—he attacked me like a tiger. The night of that encounter they both disappeared. Now I have made a clean breast of it. Tell me about yourself. Do you know, by the way, that you have developed into a most lovely woman?"

"I sometimes flatter myself that such is the case," replied the girl. "Is it your candid opinion?"

"Most assuredly it is," said the man, gazing on her with looks of admiration.

"I think there is somebody else of the same mind," said Claudine, looking down with affected modesty.

The man's brow darkened.

He seized her wrist and asked, fiercely:

"Are you married?"

"Not yet."

"Not yet! Then you have a lover. You are expecting to marry. It must be so. This man—whoever he is—loads you with valuable presents. Those are his gifts that sparkle on your fingers—his clothes in which you parade yourself before me."

"I certainly did not dress this morning with the expectation of dazzling and making a conquest of you."

"No—you thought you were rid of me for ever. You thought so once before, and you found yourself mistaken. I am certain my conjectures are correct. I know something of servants' wages, and I know they can't afford to dress as you do."

"But what if I am not a servant?—what if I am a pet—a companion in the Steinberg family? Now this is exactly my position."

Bastian shook his head.

"I know something of the German character," he said, "and a good deal about the Steinbergs. I know the old man is the last person in the world to raise a servant out of her sphere and load her with silks, satins and jewellery."

"Why, Bastian," said the girl, "you are as blind as a bat. Do you fancy that you monopolize all the plotting and scheming in the world? Do you think so poorly of my sex—or of me—as to suppose that I can't help myself when the opportunity occurs? Now listen to me—and I'll show you that you know nothing at all about me."

"I—I who have known you since you were a rag-picker in Paris—a barefooted child gnawing crusts that the street curs turned away from in disgust."

"I will convince you that you know just nothing at all about me. You do not know that I am the orphan daughter of a once wealthy French gentleman, Colonel Lionel Duval, killed in Algeria. You do not know that my mother died of a broken heart. You do not know that an unfaithful attorney ran

away with the property left for my support—that I tried to gain my living as a needlewoman, fell ill and into such utter destitution that I was compelled to seek service to save myself from starvation. You do not know that, my heart being won over by the kindness of the Steinberg family, I could not bear to play the part of an impostor, and so, sacrificing my pride, finally confessed to them that I was a lady by birth and breeding."

"I know the story is false from beginning to end."

"What of that if the Steinbergs believe every word of it?" asked Claudine, looking into his face with a cunning smile.

"Then you fabricated this romance to better yourself?"

Claudine nodded.

"And I have succeeded," she said. "Nicolaus Steinberg is the most generous of men when his sensibilities are once enlisted. Seemingly a hard, practical man, underlying his plain exterior there is much of that dreamy poetry of which I believe all Germans have their share. And when I brought his wife through a severe fit of illness by tending her night and day I found that I had earned his deathless gratitude. Then it was I made my confession—in other words, opened my budget of falsehoods. It is Nicolaus Steinberg who has loaded me with gifts."

"Because you saved his wife's life?"

"Yes; but I do not think he would thank me for saving it a second time."

"What do you mean?"

"Did you not tell me I was very beautiful?" asked the girl.

"Do you mean to say that Nicolaus Steinberg—"

"I mean to say that, Bastian."

"And that if Madame Steinberg—"

"Was so very ill again, I should think it impious to interfere with the views of Providence."

"And how is her health?"

"Alas! it is very poor indeed!" replied Claudine, casting up her beautiful eyes hypocritically. "Her death, any day, would not surprise me."

"And then?"

"And then before six months were over I should marry the widower."

"He has given you to understand as much?"

"Never directly. But I read men's hearts in their looks, not in their words."

"And you—you, young, bewitchingly beautiful—could deliberately marry a man almost old enough to be your grandfather?"

"If that man were very rich. Old men do not live for ever."

"You look very far ahead, Claudine. And if you were a young and wealthy widow?"

"Then I would marry for love—then I would share my wealth with the man of my heart, and we should be as happy as the day is long."

The lovely siren gazed on the face of her companion with a smile radiant as an angel's.

Cesar was silent for a long while. Then he said:

"All your fine plans might be blighted in a moment if I choose to interfere."

"I do not exactly perceive how you can interfere."

"I could prove your story false."

"It would not be a very safe thing for you to attempt anything of the sort," answered Claudine, ironically. "If I live in a glass house, so do you. And I think my projectiles would do more damage than yours."

"Then you defy me?"

"There is no reason to defy you, for you have not the courage nor the provocation to drag down ruin on your own head for the sake of destroying my plans. I never interfered with yours. There is no occasion for our being enemies; let us remain allies."

"Then you don't mean to throw me over?"

"How can you ask such a question? I wish to befriend you to the extent of my power. Now let me ask you if you are in need of money. I have plenty in my wallet. I was going to Stewart's when you met me."

Bastian rarely refused money when it was offered him, but for some reason he now declined the proffered assistance.

"I am not in present need," he said, coolly; "I am not without resources. If you had seen me a few weeks ago I should have had a different story to tell."

"Very well," replied Claudine. "Whatever I have I am ready to share with you."

After arranging a future place and time of meeting, they parted, Bastian leaving his address with Claudine.

The young lady took a carriage and spent her forenoon in shopping.

Certainly her queenly form and grace sustained the character she had given herself. Had she pretended she was a marchioness the tale would not have seemed improbable.

CHAPTER XIV.

On the morning of the interview between Claudine and Bastian Hermann and Frederika Steinberg were taking a walk arm-in-arm, their destination being the Hartmann's farm-house.

A pause had followed a lively chat on different topics, when Frederika suddenly said:

"Hermann, since we have been in England you have changed greatly from what you were in the Fatherland."

"In what respect, Frederika?"

"Oh, in a good many respects. Then you used to be the frankest fellow living. You used to tell me all your fancies, all your scrapes, knowing you could count on my sisterly sympathy. I haven't changed in that respect—I still take the deepest interest in all that concerns you; but you—you have secrets that you hide from me—from your father and mother."

"You are very suspicious," answered Hermann, evasively.

"How do you spend your time?" asked Frederika.

"You know I am reading law with Mr. Dalberg."

"Yes, I knew you entered his office, because my father has set his heart on seeing you a shining light of the bar. But I have called at the office a great many times and found you absent—have even waited for you hours there without seeing you."

"And of course you have mentioned my mysterious absences to father and mother?"

"Do you think so meanly of me, Hermann?" asked the girl, reproachfully.

"Well, well, go on," said Hermann, impatiently.

"What next?"

"Well then, since your mother's illness it has fallen to me to mend your clothes, sew on your buttons, etcetera. Well, sir, I have found some of your wristbands soiled with smoke and soot."

"I suppose a careless fellow like me never soiled his linen in making his fire."

"I suppose a fellow like you never makes a fire in mid-summer. At least I have noticed your grate empty, and it was only yesterday I made the girl polish it and put some evergreens in the fireplace."

"You are one too many for me, Frederika," said Hermann, "and you force me to make a full confession."

He assumed a mock-heroic air, and dropped his voice to a hoarse stage whisper as he continued:

"Listen, and betray me not. I have joined a secret gang of counterfeiters and coiners—outcasts of all lands. We have a secret cave. At midnight, when all are asleep, I come down-stairs in my stocking-feet and let myself out of the front door with a duplicate key which I forged myself. You know I have a passion for mechanics and for chemistry, and had a regular workshop at Heidelberg. My skill has become the source of profit to me. I join my accomplices, and work like a beaver in our den till within an hour of daylight. Then I hurry home, enter the house secretly, and go to bed. Oh, Frederika, betray me not! Think of the consequences. Were I arrested, condemned and sent to prison, it would kill our poor mother; it would bring down our father's gray hairs in anguish to the grave; and, as a felon's sister, Frederika—think well of that—nobody would ever marry you. You would die an old maid—the worst result of all!"

Frederika burst into a fit of hearty laughter.

"Oh, Hermann," she said, "Prince of Ham-bugs! you would never make your fortune on the stage."

"Then you don't believe I'm a felon."

"Not even for a stage villain. But why do you tease me and put me off so, when you know my heart is wholly yours?"

"And when I know that my dear little sister has her full share of her sex's curiosity. Come—I will be good and tell you all. Let's sit down here under these trees."

They sat down together, and Frederika prepared to listen attentively.

"What I told you about my taste for mechanics," said Hermann, "was no chaff. It amounts to a passion. I think I was born to be an inventor, and that, if I had a little more practical knowledge I could shine as one. I am only reading law in deference to my father's wishes. But it is terrible uphill work. In vain I fix my eyes on the weary pages of Blackstone, Justinian, and the Code Napoleon. When I turn the leaf I find I have forgotten all I have been studying. Now, if I stuck to the law alone I should go mad—I am quite sure of it. I must have a safety-valve—and you know I must not one to seek it in dissipation. Very well, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Falkenstein, the proprietor of the great machine shop over yonder."

"Yes, I have heard of him. I have heard how he came over from Germany without a penny and worked his way up to competence, like so many of our countrymen."

"Very good. Now I must let out one of Mr. Falkenstein's secrets. He is at work upon the model of a locomotive which, if it succeed, will assuredly make him one of the richest men in the world, besides ranking him among the benefactors of his race. He meets with difficulties in the course of his experiments, arising from his limited scientific requirements. In me he has found the knowledge that supplements his practical skill and experience. He teaches me what he knows and I impart what I know. As often as I can I run over to his shop, and if I do slip in and out of our house in the night time, as I told you just now, it is for no dishonourable purpose. I have told him very frankly that I am running counter to our father's views; but that if I can show him results, he will be satisfied to have me abandon an overstocked profession like the law and follow the bent of my tastes and capacities. I have not concealed from Mr. Falkenstein that I am very anxious to earn money to carry out projects of my own, and that I cannot ask my father for it without telling why I need it. Now, my dear child, I have really told you all."

"I think you have kept something back, Hermann. You haven't told me what you think of Flora Falkenstein."

"What do you know about Flora Falkenstein?" asked Hermann, a blush rising to his cheek.

"There—you needn't colour like a girl—just at the name. That's tellings. This is a gossiping place, and there is a good deal of talk among the girls about this Miss Flora."

"If they say anything to her discredit they are a lot of impertinent minxes!" cried Hermann, as the brother and sister rose and resumed their walk.

"But they don't say anything against her."

"What a wonder!"

"They say she is a very pretty, sensible girl. I should like to know her."

"You shall one of these days. Wait till our locomotive is in running order. I assure you I am vexed at all these mysteries and concealments."

In less than half an hour Hermann and Frederika had reached the farmhouse. A rustic gate admitted them into a small flower-garden brilliant with colour and fragrant from a thousand blossoms. The cottage was almost hidden by honeysuckles and other creepers. The front door stood ajar. As they crossed the threshold Max Hartmann met them with his finger on his lips.

"Tread softly," he said. "Your aunt is asleep. I wouldn't have you wake her for the world."

He ushered them into a neat little room, and bade them sit down and rest and excuse him for a moment.

"More mystery!" said Frederika.

In a minute Max Hartmann returned, showing into the room a buxom woman in a snow white cap who carried in her arms two infants.

"Twins," said the farmer, "boy and girl," as he gazed through tears of joy on the babies. "Heaven has been kind to us in our bereavement, and has sent two little angels in the place of those called to the better land."

Frederika gazed on the sleeping babes with throbbing heart and swimming eyes.

"And have you found names for them yet?" she asked of the happy father.

"Do you ask me? They are to be called Minna and Caspar."

The nurse here told Frederika that her aunt was awake and would like to see her.

She showed the way upstairs, and Hermann remained with his uncle.

After a brief chat he was joined by his sister, and they hurried away to carry home the good news.

CHAPTER XV.

We left the two forlorn children, Caspar and Minna, hidden in the nest of dock rats under the pier on the river.

It is there we again find them. The girl was asleep in the inner room; Mabel had gone out. Jim was alone on guard, and Caspar kept him company.

The two boys were crouching near the fireplace, the heat of which was grateful even in midsummer in that dismal hole.

"No answer to my letter yet!" said Caspar, despondingly.

"No. She's been to the post-office regular, Mabel has, and the answer is allers the same—no letter. If you wants my opinion, I give it gratis. You're left out in the cold like all of us is."

"And what will become of us?"

"There ain't but one thing to be done, my jolly little mudlark! Jine us."

"Join you?"

"Of course. It's clear you must do something to pay your way. If we took to takin' boarders we wouldn't expect to keep 'em for nothink. That's plain talk. It don't signify to me, p'rhaps, or Mabel either. Both of us is generous. But you see the other chaps won't stand it. We all works for a livin'."

"And I am willing to work. Only as yet I only half guess at the nature of your business."

"Well we helps unload ships," said Jim, half reluctantly. "We picks up everything that's laying round loose that we can heft—and sells it. There's men what'll buy all a cove fetches in and never ask no questions. Sailors and shipkeepers is partikler kind to us. Sometimes when it's dark we rows alongside a vessel or a lighter in the stream, and the shipkeeper will half fill our boat from the cargo. That sort of thing is a big strike; and when we've made one of them ere strikes we're flush. Of course we sees the shipkeeper."

"Of course you see him when you do business with him."

"Oh, you're jolly green. Don't you know what 'seeing' a cove means? Well, I'll enlighten your blissed ignorance. After we've sold our goods we comes across the shipkeeper or the lighterman and shoves a lot of money into his fat, and he shoves it into his pocket, and never says nothing to nobody. I've know'd Mabel to 'see' a 'cop.' I've 'seed' private watchmen myself."

"Let me understand you," said Caspar. "You mean you live by stealing."

"Well, I've heard it called so," said Jim, sucking hard at the stump of a cigar.

"And don't you know that's wrong?"

"Them what has says it's wrong—them what hasn't say it's right," replied Jim, sulkily. "Look here, young chap," he continued, "I knowe it's right that I should have enough to eat. I'm willin' to work for it, but sposin' that won't fetch me grub, I takes whatever I can turn into grub, and it's all right."

"No, Jim, it's all wrong. You have no right to take what does not belong to you, whether you need it or not; only to receive what is given to you, or what you have earned. To do otherwise is to sin against the laws of Heaven and men. That was early taught me by my father and mother."

"On a former occasion," said Jim, "I remarked, if you remember, that I never had no father and no mother, but, on the contrary, was a foundlin. Whether I was left in a market-basket, with a ring at the door and a note pinned to my clothes, saying: 'Please take keer on till called for,' I can't say, being unable to call the same to memory. All I remember is that when I was big enough to know anything, a lushy cove and a lushy woman kicked me into the street to beg, with a hint that if I didn't fetch home no pennies for 'em I'd have a good thrashin'. And them coves wasn't lyin' when they said so. When I got bigger I cut my lucky and set up for myself. I tried to earn an honest penny, as they calls it, but it was no go. I set up in the 'shine-yur-boots' business, with a mortgage on to my box and brushes, but I failed, and paid nothing in the pound. There was a motin' of my creditors, and I was discharged with a lickin'. I took to sellin' newspapers, with no better luck. Then I fined the dock-rats and I'm as happy as the day is long. Jim made this last assertion very steadily, but it was belied by a tear that ran down his dirty cheek and was hastily brushed away by his greasy coat-sleeve."

"Jine us," he added, after a pause.

"Never!" replied Caspar, firmly. "I'd rather starve."

"And see your little sister starve?" asked Jim.

Caspar winced. For one moment he wavered between right and wrong, then he said:

"Yes, if it must be so—rather starve—both of us. But we shall not starve. Providence will take care of us."

Caspar's efforts only resulted in Jim's asserting doggedly that he "couldn't see it."

Then he went back to his old point.

"You must jine us. The chaps won't keep you for nothin', and they won't let you go, because you know our secrets. Mabel herself wouldn't."

"Then I must do without her consent."

"It's my duty to prevent you catting your lucky."

"You wouldn't harm me, Jim, I know."

"Well, that's a fact. I'll shut my eyes, and say you escaped while I was asleep."

"I shall find some honest way of getting a living. I feel it—I am sure of it," said Caspar. "Only one thing troubles me: the fear of falling in to the hand of that man Baumann."

"I wouldn't be afraid of that, if I was you," said Jim. "Blowed if I don't think he's glad to be rid of you. A friend of mine what haunts the 'dive' tells me he's left there, and I've never seed him in the street since that night."

"Well, then," said Caspar, "my mind's made up. I leave to-night. But I must write one word to Mabel."

He got a pencil and a bit of paper, and hurriedly wrote a note, which he left with Jim.

It only said:

"Good-bye, Mabel. I am going out into the world again to try to earn an honest living. I shall never forget your kindness to me and my sister."



[MUTUAL RECRIMINATION.]

One day I hope to repay you. Now, I can only give you thanks. CASPAR."

"Here, young chap," said Jim, after rummaging in all his pockets. "Here's some coppers for you. If I keep 'em they'll only go for cigars and lush. I kin pick up stumps and drink water till I makes another haul. Take 'em."

"Thank you," said Caspar, drawing back; "but I can't take any of your money."

Jim hung the coins into the fire.

"All right," said he. "You can go and starve now if you likes. You'll find it rum fun though."

He was angry, for he guessed the motive of the boy's refusal of his offer.

But the feeling did not last long. He went to a shelf and put up some articles of food in a brown-paper parcel.

"Here's something to eat," he said. "Don't turn up your nose at it. It was come by honestly—as you call it—picked out of a dustbin—but it's wholesome for all that. There's thousands of servant gals that throw away the best of food, and other thousands that would starve but for their waste."

Caspar took the offering with thanks.

Then he woke up his sister and dressed her. Jim no longer hindered his going. He slid aside the plank which marked the entrance to their den, and helped the boy and girl out.

"You'll shake hands," he said, as he thrust a dirty paw through the hole.

It was unclean in two senses—both morally and physically, yet Caspar did not hesitate to take it.

That poor degraded boy had stood between the little outcasts and death itself in the hour of their direst need.

"Good-bye," said Caspar.

"Good-bye," said the other, in a husky voice.

"Don't forget old Jim."

Over the slippery planks to the pier Caspar lifted his sister carefully and set her on her feet in the street.

They gazed around them bewildered.

On one side tall black houses; on the other a maze of hulls, masts and rigging, behind which the lights of the boats flashed to and fro like lurid meteors.

Overhead the deep blue arch of Heaven sprinkled with myriads of winking stars.

Ah! how cold and far to the eyes of the homeless wanderer look these celestial lights that seem so many glorious jewels to the prosperous and happy! Nature takes its meaning from our own moods.

The boy and girl walked on. The fresh air was enjoyable after their long confinement in their place of refuge.

They went forward. They passed shops with

tempting foreign fruits displayed in the windows, and great bunches of purple and white grapes, peaches, and pears heaped in baskets beside the door.

"Oh! how I should like a bunch of grapes!" said Minna.

"If I had any money, little Minna, I'd buy you one," replied Caspar. "One of these days I shall have money, and then you shall have everything you want."

It would have been very easy to take a bunch of grapes or a couple of pears undetected, and Jim would have done so without hesitation, but Caspar would have died first.

Past great hotels, with the front windows a blaze of light, past the plate-glass windows of restaurants revealing gay parties revelling at the tables within, past theatres—till they came to the park, with its shady walks and its surrounding belt of well-lighted dwellings.

They entered the park and sat down on a bench. Here Caspar produced a store of food, eating sparingly himself but giving Minna all she craved for.

"I'm cold and sleepy, Caspar," said the girl.

The boy took her in his arms, wrapped his coat around her, and she immediately dropped into a deep slumber.

The boy sat patiently holding her, resisting the approaches of sleep himself.

One by one the seats in the park were deserted, the footfalls of pedestrians became less frequent, the rumble of passing vehicles diminished.

A policeman came along and tapped Caspar, who was dozing, on the shoulder.

"Wake up!" he said, "you can't sleep here."

"I have nowhere else to sleep, sir," said the boy, broad awake in an instant.

"No father and mother—no home?" asked the policeman.

"No home—nobody to care for us," answered Caspar.

Such a statement was of course, no novelty to the officer. We are told that there are thousands of homeless children in London.

But there was something so resigned and gentle in the tone of the boy's voice that it went straight to the man's heart.

Most of the outcasts he had to deal with were brazen, foul-mouthed and defiant.

"You would catch your death sleeping here," said the policeman. "Come with me, and I will give you a night's lodging."

"We have been doing nothing wrong, sir," said the boy. "We are honest children, believe me; only very unfortunate very poor."

"I believe you," said the man. "You look and speak like an honest boy. I'm not going to take you up—only to show you a place to sleep in. This little girl must be housed, you know."

It was only a station-house lodging that the man could give, and that among outcasts, but still it was better than the open air.

Caspar and Minna had contrived, by the help of Mabel, to keep themselves clean and tidy, even in the den where they had been sheltered. This was another circumstance in their favour.

The man took the little girl in his stalwart arms, and Caspar trudged by his side.

At the station-house the children made the same impression on the inspector that they had done on his subordinate, and the result was that a bed of coats was spread for them in a corner of the policemen's room, and not among the dirty vagabonds in the common lodging-room.

Neither of them knew anything from the time they laid their heads down until late in the morning.

Meanwhile Mabel had returned to their river habitation.

Jim was asleep, or pretended to be.

She passed in to her quarters, and instantly turning back, shook Jim roughly.

"Where are the boy and girl?" she asked.

"Asleep in your room. I wish you'd lemme be," growled Jim. "I hain't had no sleep for two days and nights."

"You're a pretty fellow to mount guard!" cried Mabel. "The children are not here."

"Now I think on it," said Jim, "no more they ain't."

"Do you dare to tell me that?"

"Yes'm—I darest to do most anything. I ain't afeard of you, fierce though you be. Look here—here's wot the young chap told me to give you."

He handed her the scrap of paper the boy had left.

"Gone!" she said, after reading the note. "They'll starve to death."

"I told the young fellow so. I gin him my experiences."

"And what did he say?"

"He said as how he'd rather starve than be a thief."

Mabel paused a moment, and then said:

"The boy was right. Better starve than be a thief."

She passed into the recess she called her own, dropped the calico curtain, and was seen no more that night.

(To be continued.)



[THE SUICIDE.]

THE FAMILY DIAMONDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Marigold," "Breaking the Charm," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXII.

Hold fast thy truth, young soldier. Gentle maiden, Keep up your promise plight: Leave ago its subtleties And gray-haired policy its maze of falsehood, But be you candid as the morning sky Ere the high sun sucks vapours up to stain it.

The Trial.

THE hard, cruel winter is past, cruel in more senses than one, not only severe in its frosts, its snows, and fierce, shipwrecking tempests, but also in the way it had seen the personages in our tale treated. Long and bitterly they suffered, their endurance, however, being rewarded by a happy issue, as is usually the case for those heavily laden ones whose trust in Providence does not let them despair.

Spring, blithesome and gay, had brought with it genial showers and bright sunshine; the happy birds sang sweet songs to welcome the green leaves whose shelter and companionship they had so long missed, and the tired earth seemed to awaken to a new life born of the invigorating weather.

We are at the pretty little country house of Doctor Waldon. The clematis, the jasmine, and the ivy which clung to its time-honoured walls were clothing themselves in their summer garments, the shrubs and trees in the garden hid their nakedness in virent attire, while the flowers sprang up proudly, inviting the attention of their young mistress, who had so long perforce neglected them.

Agnes Waldon had been entirely cured of the hideous affliction which the malice of Miss Venger had encumbered her with, for Signor Conti was as clever in healing as he was in obeying the wicked dictates of those who employed him to work out their evil ends.

She had returned to her father's house to be received with open arms, and just in time to prevent his gray hairs from going down to the grave in misery and brokenheartedness.

Doctor Waldon heard her story with amazement. Never had he heard of such unparalleled malignity as that of which the governess had been guilty, and he longed for the time when Frank Burgoyne's innocence would be proclaimed to the world and he could take steps to punish the woman who had behaved so heartlessly to his daughter.

But easy as it had been to accuse Frank of crime the process of proving his innocence was lengthy and laborious, though Conti acted with a good will and

did all that lay in his power to gain so desirable a result.

At length Ralph Hardacre, the clerk in the bank, who was really guilty of the offence with which Frank Burgoyne was charged, became alarmed at Conti's threats of exposure, and, appropriating another and larger amount belonging to his employers, absconded, leaving behind him a written confession of his fault, which was virtually an exculpation and acquittal of Frank.

Imagine a lovely morning in the middle of May, the air redolent of hawthorn and many other early flowers, the sun shining in the midst of a heaven of the brightest blue, a gentle zephyr springing from the west, and the glad and happy birds whispering notes of love and singing chaunts of gladness to the goddess of the best time which inspired their pleasing melody.

Agnes, restored to her pristine beauty, and glowing in the renewed loveliness of her complexion, was wandering about the garden, looking at trees and beds familiar to her from her childhood, visiting the bees in the apiary—all of whom seemed to love her as they buzzed busily about without stinging her—looking at a bed of violets, plucking a hyacinth, and generally making a little nosegay, when the welcome step of the postman was heard on the gravel.

Running up to him, she greeted him as an old friend, and exclaimed:

"Good-morning, Mr. Simmons; have you a letter for me?"

"Yes, miss," he answered, searching in his bundle. "You're up betimes, but you were always an early riser. It's pleasant to see you, miss, after your being away so many months. Been stopping with friends, I suppose, miss?"

"Yes," she replied, laconically.

"Ah, that's what I thought, though people did say—"

He checked himself abruptly and handed her the letter.

"What did people say, Simmons?" she asked, holding the letter in her hand, though she would have given worlds to open it because she saw it was directed in Frank's writing.

"Well, miss, no offence I hope," rejoined the postman.

"None at all."

"They did say down in the village as how you'd gone off with young Mr. Burgoyne, as you was always a little thick, and servants will talk, you know, especially in the alehouse."

"There is a shilling for you, Simmons," rejoined Agnes. "Go and drink Mr. Burgoyne's health, and

tell everybody that I hope to be married to him soon though there is no ground for their scandal."

"Thank you, kindly, miss, and Heaven bless you when you get settled," said Simmons. "I hope you won't go far away, for it's as pleasant to see your pretty face as it is to see the sunbeam."

"Now, Simmons, no compliments, or I shall tell your wife the next time I go by your cottage with a parcel of tea and what not," answered Agnes, laughing.

The postman touched his cap respectfully and went on his way, having again thanked her for her kindness.

She was very good to the struggling poor in her neighbourhood, and frequently called upon various cottagers, chatting with them about their affairs, giving them advice, which they were always eager for, and making them presents of groceries, money, and things which they found useful in housekeeping. This made her very popular, and there was no one within six miles of her father's house who would not have done anything in their power to promote her interests.

Impatiently she broke the seal of the letter and read its contents with an anxious eye, which devoured every line.

Just as she had finished its perusal her father emerged from the house and exclaimed:

"A letter, Aggy?"

"Yes, papa, from Frank," she answered.

"And what does he say?"

"Read for yourself. Oh, I am so pleased. He is coming here to-day. All is settled. His honour is cleared and he can hold up his head with any one again."

She gave her father the letter and he read it attentively, but he made no comment upon it.

"Papa," she exclaimed, almost tearfully, "you do not seem glad Frank is coming."

"I am, my child," he answered, "but it is necessary that we should talk long and earnestly together. Believe me I am sincerely rejoiced that he has defeated the odious conspiracy which fastened a disgraceful charge upon him. After breakfast I shall be engaged in visiting patients till two. Order dinner at that hour, and by that time Mr. Burgoyne will probably have arrived."

Doctor Waldon walked back into the house, crumpling up the letter and putting it in his pocket. He was much changed. His hair was grayer and the lines of his face more marked. Evidently he had suffered much during his daughter's absence, and the worry had told upon him as it will upon all of us in time, particularly if we happen to be growing old

and are not so well able to bear it as when we were young.

Agnes pouted her lips and said: "How cross he is, and he has taken my letter too. What a shame! I had scarcely had time to read it. Oh, that dear letter! How I would have read it over and over again and kissed it! I am sorry now I showed it to papa. What is the matter with him, I wonder."

She plucked her flowers to pieces petal by petal in her irritation, and at last threw away in a pet the mutilated bouquet she had been gathering.

"Agnes," exclaimed her father, from the breakfast-room window, "am I to wait all day for you to come and make the tea? You know how pressing my engagements are. Time is valuable to a man in my position, who has to work."

"What a dreadful temper he is in," said Agnes to herself as she hastened to the house and took her place at the table, made the tea and buttered the toast.

Anxiously passed the hours which had to elapse before Frank's arrival. She wandered restlessly about the house, neglecting her usual duties and being unable to settle down to anything; her needle-work was taken up and suddenly thrown aside; she caught herself constantly looking at the clock or taking out her watch.

When the middle of the day came she put on her bonnet and walked up and down the garden until at last the wheels of a fly were heard grating on the stones, and the next moment Frank Burgoyne was clasped in her arms.

"My darling," he exclaimed, "once more we are together, and under happier circumstances than we have met for some time. All is well, my calamities are cleared, our troubles are over. Could has done all that he promised, and we may look forward with hope to the future."

"Oh, Frank," she murmured, "you do not know how I have longed for this hour. Forgive me if I do not seem to enter into your feelings, but my heart is too full for words."

They wandered about the garden, indulging in that sweet converse which is the especial property of lovers until Mr. Waldon's voice was heard calling them. He had returned from making his professional visits and was ready for dinner, which the servants were placing on the table.

"Your father," said Frank. "Come, Agnes, Mr. Waldon and I have much to say to each other."

The doctor greeted him kindly, assured him of his sympathy in his misfortunes, and thanked him for all he had done to assist his daughter in the dreadful position she had been placed in by Miss Venner.

"We will resume our remarks after dinner, when Agnes will give us half an hour over our coffee," he exclaimed as the bell rang to intimate that all was prepared.

Though the doctor was friendly in his manner it occurred to Frank that he missed the warmth he had expected to find, and it was with some concern that he awaited the conversation which was to take place.

The wine was placed with the dessert on the table, and Agnes, casting a loving look upon Frank, withdrew.

"The port is with you, Mr. Burgoyne: help yourself and pass the bottle," said Doctor Waldon, after satisfying himself that the door was shut and they were free from interruption.

"Can I offer you a cigar, sir?" asked Frank, extending his case.

"Thank you, I don't smoke," replied Mr. Waldon, "though you may do as you like, for you will not annoy me in the least."

Frank lighted a cigar and sipped his wine, waiting for the father of his beloved Agnes to speak first, which he was not slow in doing.

"We will allude as little as possible to the past," exclaimed the doctor, "and occupy ourselves as sensible men with the present. My child is an inmate of my house again, and there is every reason to believe that the persecutions she has suffered are over. What I have to ask you, Mr. Burgoyne, is this, what are your prospects?"

"My prospects," answered Frank, in surprise.

"Yes, you are a poor man, you know."

"Oh, I can work," said Frank, proudly, "and you must remember that if I can get the family diamonds which my father left me, and which are extremely valuable, I shall be rich. Miss Venner has them in her possession, and I think I can force her to give them up."

"Well, what else?" demanded the doctor, dryly.

"You will of course give me your daughter's hand—"

He stopped abruptly, for the expression of Mr. Waldon's face alarmed him, it was so blank and unsympathetic.

"My dear young sir," said the latter, "you seem to forget that you are married to Miss Venner. The

governess is your wife. How can a man in this Christian country marry another wife while he has one living?"

"But I was forced into the marriage. She has left me. We are only married in name. She knew I hated and detested her, and finding out the mistake she had made she betrayed me. Look at what she has done."

"That makes no difference," answered Dr. Waldon, calmly. "You are a married man, Mr. Burgoyne, and it pains me to say it, for my daughter's sake, but all intercourse between you and Agnes must cease from this moment."

"Do you want to break her heart and mine too?" asked Frank, whose face displayed the agony he felt.

"I will put one little drop of consolation in the cup of bitterness which it is my imperative duty as a father to present to both of you," said Mr. Waldon.

Frank looked at him eagerly.

"In one of your letters you told me that Mrs. Burgoyne—"

"Mrs. Burgoyne!" repeated Frank.

"I speak of your wife," continued the doctor.

"Call her Miss Venner if you like. That will make no difference in the facts. You said that she was about to marry Lord Sunderland."

"It was reported to me as a probable event."

"Very well. So much the better for you. She for a divorce or prosecute for bigamy, and when you are free come to me and I will allow you to renew your addresses to Agnes."

A cry between a groan and an exclamation of despair broke from Frank.

"Do you disavow me, then?" he asked. "Will you not reconsider your determination?"

"Impossible."

"Miss Venner will not trouble me any more. All is at an end between us. Let her go her way and allow me to follow mine."

"I have no wish to interfere with you, Mr. Burgoyne. You are the master of your own actions and will do as you choose. All I say is this, Agnes has suffered severely. If I were to tell the friends of her family all she has gone through they would laugh at me incredulously and say that I was romancing. It is more like the events in a novel than the incidents of real life; but in reality truth is stranger than fiction. We see it every day. I have no desire that she should suffer any more, therefore—"

"But," broke in Frank, tempestuously, "she will suffer. You know she loves me. What will her future be if separated from me? Let us dare all."

"Her future is in the hands of Heaven," answered Dr. Waldon, placidly, "all I have to do is my duty."

"Will you sacrifice your child to a mistaken sense of duty?"

"You are going a little too far in speaking to me like this, Mr. Burgoyne," answered the doctor. "I am the best judge of my own actions and I know what a father owes to his child and a child to her father. You must be a stranger to this house until you can enter it with clean hands."

"Consider what I have to contend with and be merciful," said Frank, pleadingly.

"I must be cruel to be kind. There are laws of morality and civil customs which cannot be disregarded in a civilized community. I do not blame you for what you have done. Still Miss Venner is your wife, and it is an insult to me to ask for my daughter's hand while you are in bondage."

"Then all I have to say," said Frank, whose temper was rapidly leaving him, "is that your laws and customs only act to make two loving hearts miserable."

"I cannot help it," replied Dr. Waldon. "You have heard my decision. Go, and do your best. I shall receive you with open arms when all objection to your marriage is removed."

"And Agnes, may I not wish her adieu?"

"No. It is best not. There must be no farther communication between you, and I ask you as a man of honour to cease writing to her."

"You are very hard, Mr. Waldon."

"Perhaps. Yet not unnecessarily harsh. You will agree that I am right when you are calmer. What would people say if they knew that you were already married and that my child had no legal claim upon you? Could you not discard her, as a boy throws away a plaything of which he is tired?"

"I can see that it is useless to argue the point with you," replied Frank, with a sigh. "You are, strictly speaking, right, and I acquiesce in your determination. Like a knight of old I will go and seek adventures, overcome all the difficulties in my path and return to receive my bride."

"Let us hope it will be so. I will explain all to Agnes. Do not fear for her. All is not broken off between you. Pray for an early settlement of your affairs, and then, whether you obtain the family diamonds or not, I will set you up in life, for I have

not worked all these years without having a little nest egg for my old age."

Frank grasped his hand and wrung it warmly. The tears sprang to his eyes and a deep sob burst from him. He would have spoken but his heart was too full.

"Heaven bless you!" said Dr. Waldon. "Go quietly or Agnes will hear you and I wish to spare you a scene which must be painful to both. I trust you will meet with all the success you deserve."

Frank thanked him with an eloquent look.

The window opening into the lawn was open, he passed through it, gained the garden-gate, and with a long, last look at the house which contained all that he held dear in this world he ran down the road which led to the railway station and returned to town.

It was late when he reached the metropolis, but securing a bed at an hotel he went directly to the house where Miss Venner had been residing with Mrs. Burgoyne.

Much as he had reason to detest his mother-in-law, he overcame his scruples and demanded an interview with her, which she was pleased to accord him.

She was alone in her drawing-room, the children having gone to bed, and, putting down the book she had been reading, she said:

"I am glad to hear that you have vindicated the honour of your family. It has pained me much to see your name figuring in the police reports, and to be asked by numerous people if you were related to me."

"Which, I suppose, you denied?" answered Frank.

"Oh, no, not at all. I admitted the relationship, but pleaded that you were a son of the late lamented major's by his first wife, and that you had always been a good-for-nothing."

"Thank you. Perhaps the day will come when you will be glad to retract your words," he added, bitterly.

"Oh, dear no," she replied. "I am independent of everybody, say what I like, and never retract anything. But perhaps you will tell me to what fortunate circumstance I am indebted for the honour of this visit?"

"To my anxiety to know something of Miss Venner's movements. She is staying with you, I believe?"

"Was," answered Mrs. Burgoyne, speaking in the past tense.

"Is she not still an inmate of your house?" he asked, in some surprise.

"Certainly not. Do you not know that she was married this morning to Lord Sunderland, and that she has gone away to spend her honeymoon?"

This intelligence affected Frank so strongly that he was scarcely able to speak.

Miss Venner married and gone away all his hopes of seeing her were frustrated. But he had some consolation in knowing that she had committed bigamy, and this fact would give him a hold on her, which she would find it difficult to shake off.

"Where have they gone?" inquired he.

"The happy pair? Oh, on the Continent somewhere. They have kept their destination a profound secret. I believe they intend to visit all the principal cities of Europe, take a peep at the East, and go to the United States."

"How that woman has been the blight of my existence," exclaimed Frank, in a voice trembling with rage.

"Rather blame your own vicious habits and evil inclinations."

"You do not know all, nor is it worth my while to enlighten you," said Frank. "I have nothing to thank you for, and she deserves my bitterest hatred."

"If you have come here to insult me I will thank you to make your visit as short as possible," exclaimed Mrs. Burgoyne, raising her visagrette to her face in a nonchalant manner. "I am slightly fatigued, as the bride and bridegroom were married from my house, and I gave the wedding breakfast. I may congratulate myself upon being an accomplished match-maker, for it was I who brought them together, and Miss Venner may thank me for now being Lady Sunderland."

"Her triumph will be of short duration if I can come across her. I don't wonder at her going abroad when she heard of my liberation and acquittal from the odious charge which she caused to be brought against me," he exclaimed.

"What had she to do with it?"

"More than you think. Some day you may possibly know all, at present it is not worth my while to enlighten you, though it is possible that as you once conspired with your governess to get me accused of stealing the family diamonds you may have done a similar thing in this instance."

"Don't offend me by this foolish language," ex-

claimed Mrs. Burgoyne. "I know absolutely nothing of what you are talking, though your remark about the diamonds reminds me of a serious loss which I have sustained. I would not have parted with those diamonds on any account."

"I hope to recover them, you know they are left to me," said Frank, with a half-smile, "and when I am married I will give a ball and invite you to see them upon my wife, who I am sure will set them off quite as well as you. Good-bye, Mrs. Burgoyne; we part as we met—enemies. You have never lost an opportunity of doing me an ill turn, and I will not forget you if the fortune of war put you in my power."

She rose to her feet, purple with rage, and rang the bell.

"This insolence deserves to be punished," she exclaimed. "My servants will know how to chastise an insolent pauper like you, who has neither character, friends, nor fortune."

"You need not call your servants, I will relieve you of my presence," he replied. "We part never to meet again. I regard you in conjunction with Miss Venner as the cause of all my misfortunes. Perhaps it will be paid back to you, and when my troubles are over yours will begin, and you will long for the pardon of the man whom you have so cruelly injured and persecuted."

"Never," she exclaimed, cowering nevertheless under his withering denunciation.

Putting on his hat, he left the room without another word, and thus ended his interview with his vindictive and unscrupulous step-mother.

He wandered purposelessly about the streets till evening, brooding over his desolate position, almost without money, for only a few pounds remained in his possession.

He did not know which way to turn, and it seemed impossible to him to pursue Miss Venner, who had gone he knew not whither.

Baffled at every point, he thought of suicide, and contemplated the dark bosom of the silent river, which had for him, in his despair, a sort of fascination.

The water would give him rest, all would soon be over if he took the fatal plunge which had hurried so many vexed souls into eternity.

But his love for Agnes Waldon held him back. He had a purpose in life yet. There was work to be done, and time to do it in if he could only preserve his courage and battle bravely with the world.

His hour of temptation passed, he resolved to live. A calmer state of mind came over him, and quitting the river he wandered back to the West-end, with a feeling that his star had not yet set.

Nor had it, for his destiny was even then hurrying him on to a series of adventures, which tended materially to assist him in his one object in life, the utter and complete abasement of Miss Venner, now Lady Sunderland.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A hushed, oppressive silence reigned around the table where the gamblers sat absorbed. Now broken by the croupier's voice, and then by fierce cries and oaths of desperate men, who staked their all upon the hazard of the shifting game. Anon.

It was nearly midnight when the tempest that had been raging in Frank Burgoyne's soul was calmed. He felt better and softer now, for generally those fierce spirit storms have a chastening effect. Suffering is good for us; it humbles our pride, checks our ambition and tends to make us less confident in our own strength.

Being about to return to his hotel, he found himself before a private house in a street in the vicinity of St. James's; a red light over the door arrested his attention, and he remembered that in the wild days of his youth, before misfortune came upon him, he used to go to this house, which was one of the private gambling saloons, which still flourished in London unknown to and unmolested by the police.

Remembering the password, he knocked at the door, spoke to the porter and was admitted, determining to risk what little money he had left upon the hazard of the game. A few pounds were all he had, and they were of no use to him in his search after Miss Venner. If he could change them, as if by magic, into a thousand he would be well supplied to prosecute the end he had in view.

Ascending a broad staircase, he entered a room which was brilliantly lighted, a cold collation was spread upon a table, and wines of all descriptions were ready to the hand, it being a rule that every one who played, if he only risked a sovereign, had a right to refresh himself at the expense of the proprietor of the establishment.

Powdered footmen, dressed in liveries of blue and silver, were in readiness to attend upon the gambler, and one held open the door of an inner room for Frank to pass through.

This was also well lighted and superbly furnished, so that nothing seemed wanting to interest the eyes or enthrall the senses except the presence of women and music.

A couple of dozen men were sitting round, or standing by the table at which sat the croupier or banker with his rake, an instrument he used to collect the stakes which were lost.

One gentleman got up with an angry exclamation, and Frank at once took his place. The unhappy man had lost his last sovereign and could play no more, though he felt persuaded in his own mind that if he had only had a few more sovereigns to play with his luck would change and he should be the winner of thousands.

Without any attempt at judgment or reflection, Frank put down a handful of gold, all he had, upon red, trusting entirely to the favour of the blind goddess.

He did not know that there had been a persistent run on the black for some time and that it was extremely probable that the luck would change to red, as indeed it did, for when the game was made and the ball revolved it stopped at red and the croupier covered his stake.

There were now about sixty pounds upon his colour, and he left it there. Again the ball revolved, and a second time he was victorious, his stake was covered again, and he had a hundred and twenty pounds as his right, which if he won again would give him two hundred and forty by his process of doubling. Several times did the ball revolve, each time facing red as persistently as before it had favoured black, and in half an hour Frank had before him a pile of notes and gold representing between three and four thousand pounds.

Many men wild with the delirium of success would have continued to play with the hope of breaking the bank, but Frank was wise in time.

Gathering up the notes and gold, he stuffed them into his pockets, intimated that for the present his game was over, and vacated his chair for any one who liked to take it.

At that moment he heard a man say:

"Black once more. It is my last chance." Looking over the table, he saw a young man, desperately haggard and fearfully pale, who trembled all over with the agitation his bad luck had produced, for all the time Frank had been winning he had been losing.

"Who is that?" he inquired of a gentlemanly man, leaning against the fire-place with an eye-glass in his hand, scrutinizing the game.

"Oh, that is Mr. Deepwater; don't you know him?"

was the reply.

"He seems to be playing recklessly," cried Frank.

"No wonder, poor fellow!"

"Why?"

"The girl he loved was married this morning to Lord Sunderland. She was a little governess in Mr. Burgoyne's family, but had a little money. Sunderland fell in love with her and they were married at St. George's Church."

"Were you present at the ceremony, may I ask?"

"Of course I was. Haven't you seen the evening papers? I was Sunderland's best man, had to propose the bride and bridegroom at the breakfast, and threw shoes after the carriage when they started for their honeymoon. Deuce of a bore all that sort of thing, but what can you do when you have known a fellow all your life and he asks you as a favour?"

"Whom have I the honour of talking to?" asked Frank.

"Don't you know me? I know your face somewhere—seen you about I am sure!" exclaimed the gentleman, with an aristocratic drawl which young men in society are very apt to affect. "My name is Mostynford."

"Ah, indeed! I have often heard of Lord Mostynford," said Frank, "and so Mr. Deepwater is reckless because he was cut out by Lord Sunderland. He has had a very narrow escape if he only knew it."

"How is that? Do you know the lady?"

"Slightly. Is Sunderland rich, can you tell me?"

"Well, he wasn't, but his luck is dead in now, for this very day—after the marriage, mind you, after the marriage—he got a telegram to say his rich old aunt was dead, and she couldn't have left him less than ten thousand a year. Wasn't that luck? Ten thousand a year, and died just at the proper time so as not to stop the wedding."

"A most obliging old lady, I am sure," said Frank, with a half-smile.

"I wish a few of the old tabbies from whom I have expectations would be half as kind."

"Do you know, my lord," asked Frank, trying to control his anxiety as well as he could, "where the newly married couple have gone to spend their month of happiness?"

"Oh, yes. They started for Paris. Sunderland himself told me they should be there some time, and then go on to Brussels and Vienna," answered Lord Mostynford.

Frank was radiant with joy, the luck was turning in his favour with a vengeance.

From being nearly penniless he was in possession of a large sum of money, quite as much as he would require for his expenses during two years.

He had discovered the resting-place of the falsely called Lady Sunderland and he felt that he should be able the very next day to commence his campaign under the happiest auspices.

Thanking his lordship for so courteously answering his questions, he directed his attention once more to the gaming-table.

Deepwater had staked his last crown and lost. It was all that he had left in the world. He had begged himself. Rising with a stifled curse from his chair, he retired to the other room.

"Gone to put some champagne courage into himself," remarked Lord Mostynford. "He will come back and borrow five pounds from somebody presently and perhaps pull back all his losses. I've seen fellows do that."

"Indeed," said Frank. "Do you not play to-night, my lord?"

"I have been amusing myself. Lost a trifle—about a thousand pounds. Nothing to speak of. Shall have another try presently, perhaps. I am just watching the chances. By Jove! what a sum you had."

"Yes. Pretty fair," answered Frank.

Suddenly there was the report of a pistol in the next room.

"Somebody shot himself," remarked Lord Mostynford, coolly. "Shouldn't wonder if it was Deepwater. Stupid thing to do, but he looked very wild."

Those who were playing did not even turn their heads or ask any questions, so absorbed were they in the game; but the onlookers and the others, headed by Frank, ran from one room to the other to see what had happened.

They beheld Deepwater lying upon the floor, stretched on his back, his head, from which blood was flowing, being supported by the two footmen, who took the matter as calmly and collectedly as if it was not an unusual occurrence for a gambler to kill himself.

Frank went up to the miserable man and found that he was quite dead. The ball had been fired in his mouth, and, passing through the brain, had caused instant death.

"What will they do with the body?" asked Frank of a bystander. "Are they not afraid of an inquest?"

"Oh, no," answered the person addressed. "The body will be placed, say, in St. James's Square, with the pistol by his side, and somebody will find it. There cannot be any evidence to criminate the gambling-house. You see, we should all be summoned on the inquest if we were to call in the police. It wouldn't do. These things must be kept secret. There will be a public mystery for a day or two, the newspapers will have their say, and all will be forgotten."

Frank turned away with a shudder.

To what extent was Miss Venner answerable for Deepwater's death?

Frank fancied that he could trace the effect of her blighting hand in the shocking catastrophe which had taken place, and it was with increased hatred for her odious character that he made his way downstairs into the street, where he hailed a passing cab and drove to his hotel, a far happier man than he had been when he left in the morning, and since then during his interview with Mrs. Burgoyne and his subsequent melancholy wanderings and contemplation of the river intent on suicide.

He had exemplified the truth of the adage that "while there is life there is hope." Nil desperandum. Never despair.

The next day he wrote a letter to Dr. Waldon saying that he had for the present lost sight of Miss Venner, but that he was on her track and hoped to overtake her before long. He begged as a favour that he would represent his absence to Agnes in the most favourable light possible and assure her of his lasting and unalterable affection.

He started for Paris by the mail train which left London at half-past eight. In the first-class carriage in which he travelled were two men; one was a young French gentleman of handsome exterior and elegant dress and a manner denoting that he belonged to the best society, the other was a middle-aged man, apparently a respectable merchant, but evidently more of a business than a fashionable person.

For the first few miles no one spoke. Then the commercial-looking man offered a cigar to Frank, who refused it and went on reading his paper.

"Weary work travelling," exclaimed the com-

mercial man. "What do you say, sir, to a game at cards? I have some with me I think in my bag."

"Thank you," said Frank. "I never play with strangers."

The man turned from him and addressed the French traveller in his own language, and as Frank was a good French scholar he perfectly understood what passed between them.

With the latter he was more successful. The cards were produced and they played for money—several five-pound notes finding their way from the French gentleman's pocket to that of his enterprising travelling companion.

Frank grew tired of reading and watched the game narrowly without appearing to do so. It was *écarté*, a game in which the turning up of a king counts one. This, therefore, is an object, and nine times out of ten when the commercial-looking man dealt he was successful in doing so.

Frank Burgoyne thought this odd and watched more closely still until at last he distinctly saw the man place a king up his sleeve so as to have it ready to put on the top of the pack.

Seizing his arm in a vice-like grip, he exclaimed, fiercely:

"You rascal. I see what your plan is, but you shall not rob an unsuspecting foreigner who I fear has more money than wit!"

"What do you mean?" asked the sharper, white with rage and terror combined.

Frank shook him roughly till the card fell from his sleeve and he was exposed.

"You have been robbed, sir," continued Frank to the Frenchman, "but I will get you your money back again. How much have you lost?"

"About seventy pounds," said the Frenchman.

"Give this gentleman his money back again and get out at the first station we stop at!" exclaimed Frank to the cheat, "or I will hand you over to the police."

"You are mistaken," said the sharper. "But no matter. When there is a dispute at cards it is better to return the money. There it is, sir; we are now as we were when we began." He handed a handful of notes to the Frenchman. "I shall leave your company, for I am a gentleman and not accustomed to accusations of this character. Next time I travel on the line I will be careful what sort of people I speak to."

Frank answered him with a supercilious smile. The train slackened speed and stopped at a station. The sharper got out, and when they were alone the Frenchman handed Frank a card upon which was printed the inscription "Count de Grenelle, Rue la Fitte, Paris."

In a moment Frank had returned the civility and the count replied, looking at his card:

"Mr. Burgoyne, I have to thank you for your kindness, for you have prevented me from being shamefully imposed upon, though it would have served me right for playing with a total stranger. Perhaps you do not understand French?"

"Perfectly."

"Ah, that is so like an Englishman. You are all so accomplished," returned the count, with one of his winning smiles. "I presume you are related to Mrs. Burgoyne, who is so well known in London."

"I am the son of Major Burgoyne, by his first wife. Mrs. Burgoyne is my step-mother, and we are not on friendly terms."

"Ah, that is not surprising. That accounts I suppose for your not being at Lord Sunderland's wedding yesterday."

"Were you there?" asked Frank.

"I had the honour to be invited, as his lordship is a friend of mine. We both belong to the jockey club in Paris. Is Paris your destination?"

"It is."

"I shall have the greatest possible pleasure in taking you under my wing, and doing what I can for you with my friends," returned the Count de Grenelle.

"I thank you very much."

"To-morrow is your ambassador's ball. Lord Lyons will be pleased to see an Englishman of such good family. If you are too late to gain an invitation I will take you. We must be friends, Mr. Burgoyne."

"With all my heart," said Frank. "I shall arrive a complete stranger in Paris."

"Yours is a visit of pleasure I imagine?"

"Entirely."

"Then you could not place yourself in better hands, Mr. Burgoyne," continued the Count de Grenelle. "You have rendered me a service, for although I am tolerably rich I do not like to be robbed. I will do all that I can in return."

Frank felt that he had made an acquaintance who was likely to be of service to him, and in his agreeable society he completed his journey to the French capital.

"Ah," he said to himself. "you may fancy your-

self secure, Miss Venner, alias Mrs. Burgoyne, alias Lady Sunderland, but your enemy is treading upon your heels. Beware! the day of reckoning is at hand."

(To be continued.)

LITTLE SUNSHINE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LILY had reached the hall-way below, and was rushing toward the door leading to the open air, when suddenly she was seized from behind by a pair of strong arms, and carried, as though she had been an infant, into the front parlour, the door of which was instantly locked and bolted, and she was then deposited gently in an easy-chair and confronted by the ruling spirit of the iniquitous den, the splendid-looking but terribly debauched and vicious Jack Haines.

"Not so fast, my pretty one!" he exclaimed, playfully. "Why, it isn't possible that you were about to leave us so unceremoniously! Why, I haven't even been introduced to you yet, when I expected to spend some months in your sweet society. By the way, as there is nobody present to do me that favour, I will introduce myself. My name is Haines—the Hon. John Haines, at your service!"

And the beautiful villain bowed with well-affected courtesy.

"You shall bitterly rue this outrage!" exclaimed the unfortunate Lily, with blazing eyes, "if you do not instantly set me free!"

"Outrage! What outrage?" exclaimed Haines, in a tone of well-affected wonder. "My dear young lady, I have offered you no outrage, I have merely prevented you from acting very rashly, and seated you tenderly in an easy-chair. Why, do you know if I had allowed you to pass through that door you would undoubtedly have fallen into the jaws of a ferocious Siberian bloodhound—who is so ungallant as not to recognize beauty when he sees it—and have been torn piecemeal before you could have been rescued?"

"I could not have met a brute fiercer than yourself!" exclaimed Lily, with bitterness, "nor one half so much to be dreaded. I had rather die by the fangs of a dog than to breathe the same atmosphere with you!"

"Now that is unkind, young lady," returned Haines, with affected sorrow; "you shouldn't speak that way of me, and you won't when you know me better. Why, I'm the most tender and docile fellow in the world where beauty is concerned. All who know me give me credit for that if for nothing else. However you'll do me justice when we are better acquainted—I am certain of that."

"The criminal courts will do you justice when they are better acquainted with you—I am certain of that!" returned Lily, bitterly.

"By Heaven! she is pretty!" exclaimed Haines, as though communing with himself—"she is beautiful! absolutely divine! Now who would have thought that such an old villain as Luke Davis could be the father of so much loveliness! My darling," he continued, addressing Lily as though she might have been his affianced bride, "if I had known you were half so attractive I should have invited you here long since. But better late than never. And now we must be married as speedily as possible. We shall go to the Continent for a wedding trip. We will make the tour, I am familiar with every inch of the route, having gone over the ground half a dozen times already. You shall see gay life both in Berlin and Paris—gay life among the nobles I mean. I have money enough to load a ship. I will travel as a count—you as my countess. We will visit the Spas—Baden-Baden, and all that sort of thing. You shall squander a cool million at play if you like. And you shall have diamonds, carriages, and a wardrobe that would make an Eastern princess mad with envy! What says my pretty one? When shall it be, eh?"

Lily had no heart to answer him now. She was utterly crushed, and could only cover her face with her hands and sob bitterly.

"Well, don't cry, pretty one," continued Haines, in the same tantalizing strain; "beauty in tears was always too much for me, and if you will only cease weeping I will give you twenty-four hours for reflection before I say another word about marriage. But, in the meantime, I couldn't sleep to-night—I really couldn't—if I did not rifle one kiss from those red, rosy lips!"

As he spoke he stooped over the girl.

Quick as lightning she perceived the stock of a silver-mounted pistol protruding from an inside pocket of his coat; and, with the bound of a tigress springing to defend its young, she seized the weapon, and, jumping some distance from him, levelled it directly at his head, exclaiming fiercely as she did so:

"Now, sir, open that door and let me pass freely from this house, or this moment is your last."

Jack Haines was more surprised than frightened at this sudden change of affairs. He did not dream of danger, for he did not suppose that a weak, timid girl like Lily would dare to pull the trigger. He imagined that the mere sound of the explosion of a pistol would terrify her into insensibility.

But he little knew the stuff of which she was made.

Highly sensitive, refined and modest, she would, under ordinary circumstances, have shuddered at the idea of shedding the blood of the vilest of brutes, but the idea that her honour was at stake outweighed every other consideration with her, and rendered her as fearless of heart and as steady of nerve as the bravest soldier that ever led a forlorn hope.

"Return that pistol, my little beauty," said Haines, after he had regarded her a moment with undisguised admiration; "it is no plaything for a baby like you. It may explode accidentally and hurt you."

And as he spoke he took one step towards her.

With nerves unshaken and eyes blazing fire Lily levelled the pistol directly at his head as she said: "Beware, sir! I should hate to shed a single drop of human blood, even though it came from a carcass as vile as your own, but Heaven has providentially placed this weapon in my hand to be used in the most holy of purposes, and by the spirit of my dead mother, whose influence I now feel about me, I swear that if you advance a step farther I will send your cowardly soul on its long journey! I am but a working girl, but you know how well I can keep my oath. I have kept one in favour of your iniquitous band, and I shall keep the one which may compel me to slay its despicable leader."

"By Heaven, you are game, after all!" exclaimed Haines, in a tone of admiration; "I believe you would shoot!"

"It lacks but one minute of five o'clock," returned Lily, calmly, at the same time casting her gaze, for a single instant, on the clock which was ticking on the mantel-piece; "if, when that clock strikes, I am not outside of this house, your life-current shall stain the carpet where you stand, and may Heaven have mercy on your guilty soul!"

Jack Haines was both a brave and a desperate man, but he was not disposed to court death in such a way as that in which it now threatened him. He knew the girl would keep her oath. At first the idea occurred to him that he might, by making a sudden dash at her, distract her aim, and thus escape unhurt; but one look at her brave, determined eye, and steady hand, convinced him of the fallacy of this supposition; and, with a smothered imprecation, he unlocked and unbolted the door, and, throwing it wide open, said:

"The game is yours, birdie! Pass out!"

"I am not so shallow as to be caught in such a trap," returned Lily, scornfully; "you must pass out first, nor shall I cease to cover you with this pistol till you have opened the hall door and allowed me to pass out."

The villain saw that his ruse to seize her from behind had failed, so he preceded her to the hall door, which he was about to open when suddenly Lily uttered a piercing shriek of anguish; and, turning around, Haines perceived that the imp, the boy, had stolen cat-like behind her and snatched the weapon from her grasp.

"Ha! well done!" exclaimed Haines, in a tone of exultation, "you shall be rewarded for this."

And, with a bound, he again seized the unfortunate and now defenceless girl.

Lily gave one piercing shriek of utter despair, and then moaning "Lost! Irretrievably lost!" swooned dead away into the arms of her triumphant captor.

Haines was about to bear his insensible burden again into the parlour when suddenly there came three distinct raps on the hall door followed by a peculiar whistle.

"It is old Flint's signal!" exclaimed the chief of the counterfeiters, in a tone of surprise. "What in the name of all the fiends could have brought him here at this time? Open the door, imp, and I will hold the girl in the draught a moment—perhaps the cool air may revive her."

The boy did as directed, and the next moment Jack Haines was knocked senseless by a powerful blow from the clenched fist of Ernest Hartley, who, seizing the inanimate form of Lily Davis, carried her into the parlour, and laid her gently on a lounge, muttering to himself as he did so:

"I know not who you are, unfortunate girl, but I do know that you have been brutally treated or you would not have lost consciousness. I will assist in the capture of the fiends, and then you shall be attended to."

Leaving her for a moment, he joined the detectives, only to find, however, that brief as was the period since they had entered the house, every member of the desperate band, save Lord Mortimer Littleton, who had somehow made his escape, was under arrest and in irons. So suddenly had been

the attack and so entirely unexpected that the counterfeiters were taken really by surprise, and, before they could recover from their panic, were put beyond the power of any but a feeble resistance.

The instructions of the crafty and unscrupulous Flint had been carried out to the letter, but that worthy took excellent care not to trust his own precious body within the precincts of the den, well knowing that his life would not be worth a moment's purchase if one of his late vicious companions could compass his destruction. He had remained in the boat, and there waited the return of the expedition.

We need hardly say that Ernest Hartley's surprise and joy were beyond expression when, upon returning to the assistance of the lady whom he had snatched from the embrace of Jack Haines, he found in her his affianced and dearly cherished bride.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE day set for the trial of Lily Davis and Ernest Hartley arrived, but it did not bring with it the hopeless despair and heart-crushing agony which the guileless young couple had supposed it would when they were first arrested, for warm friends had flocked around them, cheering and inspiring them with words of sympathy and consolation. Moreover their mysterious friend, the Polish baron, had convinced Hartley long before that their discharge was certain on the day of trial, and that the conviction of the guilty parties was equally as certain.

Hartley, much as he had disliked the baron at first, was thoroughly assured of his friendship for both Lily and himself after an interview, to which he had been summoned at the attorney's office, immediately after his liberation on bail. But why the foreign gentleman manifested so deep an interest in their welfare he could not divine, nor would his mysterious patron give him the slightest information with regard to the matter. When questioned he was either stubbornly reticent or gave answers of so evasive a character that nothing could possibly be made of them.

Hartley at last grew tired of attempting to unravel the mystery, and determined to practise patience and let matters take their course, confident as he was that everything would be made plain in time.

The court had assembled, and the accused, with their counsel and friends, were present to await whatever action might be taken in their case. Jennie Brown and Tony Tucker were of course there among a host of others, and the latter was more than usually demonstrative and garrulous.

"I say, Mr. Lawyer!" he said, in an undertone to the counsel of his friends, "I hope you'll call me for the first witness. I'm bustin' to tell what I know about Little Sunshine and her lover! If I don't put it to the jury strong you can just take and go to work and shoot me! That's what's the matter!"

"You will not be called upon at all," was the lawyer's quiet rejoinder.

"Eh? you don't mean that!" exclaimed Tony, in a tone of bitter disappointment. "What's the reason I won't be called upon, I should like to know?"

"Because there will be no trial," was the reply. "It has been decided to enter a nolle prosequi, and that will end the matter, so far as the accused is concerned."

"A nolle what?" exclaimed Tony, indignantly; "you go to Jericho with your nollies! Ain't a-goin' to be no trial, eh? And here I've been all night last night studyin' my speech! I didn't sleep a wink for thinkin' it over, and now you say there ain't a-goin' to be no trial! I ain't a-goin' to stand it no-how! I'll make my speech if I get hung for it!"

"Do behave yourself, Tony!" exclaimed Jennie Brown, impatiently; "you are always making a laughing-stock of yourself. How are you going to testify if you're not called upon?"

"But I will be called upon," persisted Tony, "and I will make my speech or die! I never like to do anything agin your wishes, Brownie, but this 'ere's a matter of principle, this 'ere is. I'm a-goin' to let these lunk-headed lawyers see that they can't cough me down when I've got a good cause—that's what's the matter."

There was a trial for assault and battery on at the time, and when that was finished the case of Lily and her lover was next in order.

Tony was suddenly very still. He was evidently meditating deeply on some weighty matter.

Presently the counsel for the defence in the assault and battery case called as a witness one William Jones.

Now it so happened that the said Jones was not in court at the time, and to the horror of Jennie Brown and the great amusement of Lily's counsel Tony Tucker moved forward to the witness-box, the lawyer was so deeply immersed in his case that he did

not notice Tony's refusal to be sworn, nor did he upon looking up discover the difference between Tony and the witness whom he had called, but began at once by saying:

"Now, young man, tell all you know concerning this matter."

"I'm a-goin' to do it!" exclaimed Tony, emphatically, "you can take and bet your branes onto it. The fact about the matter is that these 'ere prisoners never orter been arrested at all. What kind o' fellers are you big wigs and lawyers, any how? You know all about law, you do, but mighty little about justice! It don't make no difference how innocent a feller may be, if you once get him mixed up in your law rigmaroles he ain't got no more show than a rat in a trap with a dozen Scotch terriers waitin' around to go at him when the trap is opened."

This style of speech had taken both court and counsel so utterly by surprise that Tony had proceeded thus far before they had the power to interrupt him, but now the court thundered out, angrily:

"Silence, sir! How dare you use such language?"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Tony, "it cuts, does it, old buffer? It's so seldom you get anybody here that's got pluck enough to tell you the truth that it makes you squirm. I know these 'ere prisoners like a book, I do—both o' 'em, and I'm proud to know 'em. There ain't a finer feller a-top o' the earth than Ernest Hartley, and there ain't a sweeter angel livin' than Little Sunshine. In fact there ain't any gal out o' jail that can hold a candle to her except my Brownie. You're a pretty set of snoozers to deal out law, ain't you? Such sardines as you orter be sent to prison yourself, instead of spendin' the people's money on your fine clothes, and diamonds and things. I'd like to have my way with such galleots as you are, and I'd make you change places with some o' the poor fellers you're a-sendin' to the jug. You're a poaty set o' roosters, ain't you? I'm a-talkin' mysself now! Why—"

"This is outrageous!" again thundered the magistrate. "Is the business of the court to be interrupted by this vagabond? Officer, arrest that person and lock him up till further orders! I'll see whether this court is to be respected or not!"

"Vagabond!" shrieked Tony, glaring at the magistrate. "Now ain't you a nice old pup to be callin' me a vagabond? I work for my livin' I do; and what do you do when the court is over? I've seen you goin' home as tight as a biled owl. And you call me a vagabond. I'll tell you what I'll take and do with you—I'll—"

Here Tony was seized from behind by a stalwart officer, who, in spite of his struggles, bore him shrieking from the court, vociferating all the way that he could "Warm the judge, jury, witnesses, and the whole court, if they'd only give him half a show, and he'd take and bet a pound he could."

After peace was once more restored the business of the court proceeded, and in another half-hour the case of our hero and heroine was reached and promptly disposed of.

The accused were honourably discharged by the magistrate, who, in a few well-timed remarks complimented them both highly, expressing the deepest regret that they had been placed, by the force of circumstances, in so unpleasant a position and the most lively satisfaction that the affair had ended so creditably to them.

At the intercession of his friends Tony, quite humbled and chap-fallen, was brought before the magistrate and discharged with a severe reprimand.

"I didn't say anything but the truth, though," he muttered to himself, as he wended his way homeward, "but the truth don't suit exactly in these 'ere courts—that's what's the matter. Oh, won't Brownie blow me up when I go to see her to-night—won't she, though?"

CHAPTER XXXI.

THERE was trouble in the Moreland mansion. The morning following the grand party, the particulars of which were given in a previous chapter, a circumstance transpired which, although it might reasonably have been looked for, created the greatest confusion and consternation in the household.

The family had assembled at the breakfast-table, all but him who should have been at the head of the grand establishment, but who had never been recognized as having any authority whatever.

Old Mr. Moreland had not got downstairs yet—a very unusual circumstance, for he was generally a very early riser.

"Here, John!" exclaimed Mrs. Moreland, in an anything but amiable tone; "go right upstairs and see why that stupid old man does not make his appearance. I declare he's getting more and more imbecile and useless every day. He can't be ill—no danger of that—he's never ill, and I've always something the matter with me. Go up to him and tell

him if he does not come down immediately he shall not have any breakfast. I'll let him know I'm not going to keep the table standing for him."

John departed on his errand as directed, but he had not been gone more than a couple of minutes before he came flying back again three steps at a time, and rushed into the dining-room with chattering teeth and eyes starting from their sockets.

"What on earth's the matter?" exclaimed Mrs. Moreland, angrily. "Speak, can't you?" she continued, as the man stood staring at her in the vain endeavour to articulate.

"The old man's done gone!" he endeavoured at last to ejaculate.

"Gone! what do you mean?" queried his mistress.

"Dead!" ejaculated John, solemnly, "dead as a door-nail, sure's you're born!"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mrs. Moreland, with about as much feeling as she might have exhibited had she been speaking about a horse; "it can't be! You're frightening me at nothing! We'll soon see what the matter is!"

And the lady, followed by her daughter, made her way in some haste to the old man's sleeping apartment.

They found him lying on his back, his hands folded on his bosom and his eyes wide open, staring with the glassy gaze of death.

Mrs. Moreland placed her hand calmly upon his forehead, then she removed it to his heart, then she felt his pulse, and at length she said, in that dread whisper which the most abandoned and reckless will use in the presence of death:

"He is dead, Ruth, indeed, and nothing can be done for him!"

Then she closed his eyes, beckoned her daughter away, and returning below stairs sent one of her servants for her family physician.

The doctor arrived promptly, but of course he could do nothing. He was a good-hearted man, and had often commiserated the condition of the deceased gentleman, and now as he stood looking at him after having instituted a hurried examination he murmured:

"Poor old gentleman, he is past all trouble now, and is doubtless happier—far happier—than while on earth."

"What do you think he died of, doctor?" asked the grand lady, whimpering.

"Heart disease," replied the physician; "I have been expecting it for some time past. I did all I could for him, but I knew he was incurable."

"Well, what are we to do, doctor?" asked the lady, with much anxiety.

"I think I may properly give you a certificate of burial," was the reply, "although it is some time since I treated the deceased for the disease of which he died."

"Oh, yes, doctor, do," pleaded the widow, "it would be so dreadful to have an inquest in the house with the dreadful coroner and his horrid jury tracking in the mud and messing the furniture."

So the certificate was duly made out, and two days later the funeral took place. It was a grand affair, of course, and was conducted in strict accordance with the latest style.

The family remained upstairs, while the funeral services went on below, and although no thought of the wealth of affection which the deceased gentleman had lavished on his life in the long ago passed through the widow's mind, and although the daughter gave no thought to the gentleness and loving-kindness which had ever characterized her dead father in his bearing toward her, yet both wept copiously as they were in duty bound to do, and everybody said the funeral was a very grand affair indeed.

It was some weeks subsequent to the funeral when Ruth Moreland complained of being very ill. She said she knew she had the heart-disease and would die some night just as her father had died.

She only said this, however, to frighten her mother, who, with all her faults, did love her child. It was the only love, perhaps, which her cold heart had ever known.

Ruth was suffering from no organic trouble. Her only complaint was a disposition to have her own way.

Her mother had never exactly admired Lord Mortimer Littleton, even before she had reason to believe him an impostor. While she thought him a lord she was willing that he should pay his addresses to her daughter.

To be the mother-in-law of a lord, let his character be what it might, was to her everything, but after he had been publicly branded as a counterfeiter, and was a fugitive from justice, she was of course horrified at the idea of an alliance between her daughter and him, and congratulated herself on the narrow escape which Ruth had run.

Not so with the daughter, however.

Willful, perverse, and silly, she had been in com-

stant correspondence with Lord Mortimer ever since his escape from the officers of justice, and he had made her believe that he was a sadly persecuted individual, that he was just exactly what he had represented himself to be, a real lord, and that his love for her absorbed his entire being.

To do Ruth justice, she was not entirely to blame for being so blinded, for she had a tutor to strengthen her infatuation, and a most dangerous one.

Mrs. Sutton, the housekeeper, was her adviser, and she acted as a friend of both.

She lost no opportunity to speak in praise of Lord Mortimer, and to express her full belief in his entire innocence and honesty, and at last she concocted a plan to bring the young couple together.

She represented to Mrs. Moreland that beyond a doubt her daughter was suffering from heart disease inherited from her father, and when she had frightened her sufficiently she suggested that she knew a very eminent physician who made such diseases a specialty, and who would, if called in time, certainly cure the patient.

The bait took, and Mrs. Sutton was instructed to send at once to Dr. Danforth, the name which the housekeeper had given as that of the great man who was to cure her daughter.

The doctor came, and Miss Moreland requested that her mother should not be present at the interview. She said it would excite and render her nervous, and Mrs. Moreland, willing to humour her daughter, refrained from entering the room in which the patient lay.

When the door was closed, and the doctor found himself alone with the lady, he approached the bed dropping on one knee beside it, and seizing the foolish girl's hand, covered it with kisses while he exclaimed:

"My darling! My angel! How can I ever repay you for your confidence and your kindness? It's more than I deserve, you know—a deal more!"

"Bless me, Mortimer," she replied, "how perfect your disguise is. I should never have known you!"

"Yes," he rejoined, "it's very perfect. I never do things by halves, you know. I passed a detective half an hour ago, and even he didn't know me."

"How dreadful that you should be obliged to skulk about in disguise as though you were a felon!" exclaimed Ruth. "Why don't you come out openly and proclaim your innocence, and then mamma wouldn't oppose us."

"Why, my angel," exclaimed Lord Mortimer, "I could establish my innocence in five minutes, you know, if I so pleased, but there is another reason now—a stronger reason than ever—why I should remain incog. My life's in danger, my darling. I found it out only yesterday. I got a letter, notifying me that my younger brother has set on foot a plan to take away my life so that he may inherit my title and my vast estates. He has sent on five assassins to seek me out and slay me, and they are in this city this blessed minute."

"How dreadful!" exclaimed Ruth, with a look of horror.

"Yes, it's very dreadful!" exclaimed Lord Mortimer, "but the thing's been done before, you know, and may be done again—so you see how important it is that we should be married and get away from this city as soon as possible. Has Mrs. Sutton made all preparations for your departure?"

"Yes," answered Ruth. "What a dear old soul she is. She has got my clothes all packed and everything in readiness. She did her best to convince mamma of your innocence, Mortimer, but she couldn't move her a bit. And this is somewhat singular, too, for she seems to have a strange influence over mamma, and can make her do almost anything she pleases. But in our case she was as immovable as a statue, and refused to listen to a word which favoured our union."

"Well, never mind, darling," returned Lord Mortimer, as he tenderly kissed the foolish girl, "strategy must accomplish what argument failed to do. I have a carriage in waiting a few doors above. I must, of course, see the old lady before I depart, and let her know how the patient is. She will never recognize me, for I can disguise my voice as completely as I have disguised my person. When I am gone you must manage to steal from the house unobserved. Mrs. Sutton will accompany you and carry your valise. We shall, doubtless, reach our destination without difficulty. When we get there I know an old clergyman who will marry us without asking any questions, and after we are made one the old lady may do her worst, for she can't alter anything, you know."

"That's very true, Mortimer," returned Ruth, "but I really believe I shall faint before I reach the carriage. The whole thing is so dreadful!"

"Nonsense!" returned her lover, "you'll do nothing of the sort. You'll be brave for my sake, you know, and for your own sake, too, for the happi-

ness of your life and mine depends upon it. Don't forget that. It would be so foolish to spoil the whole thing just at the time success is certain, you know, if you get up a little nerve. And now I must go, or the old lady will get impatient." And again kissing Ruth he passed out into the entry, where he found Mrs. Moreland waiting in a great state of anxiety for his report.

"How is my darling, doctor?" she asked, in a tremulous tone; "is she very ill?"

"There is nothing the matter with her but what I can cure, madam," replied Lord Mortimer, assuming a gruff tone of voice, "if my instructions are strictly adhered to. You have called me in time, and the case is a very simple one if properly treated. But you must not disturb the patient. You may go in and see her, but you must not remain with her more than five minutes at the very extent, if you value her life. She needs rest, madam—absolute rest. She must see nobody—speak to nobody—or she may be dead before morning. Good-evening, madam, good-evening."

And the doctor bowed himself out.

In ten minutes from that time Ruth had joined Lord Mortimer, and the twain were driven rapidly away.

We will leave the reader to imagine the agony of mind which the proud mother felt on the following morning when she found that her darling—the only being whom she had ever loved—had fled she knew not whither.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE time fixed upon for the trial of the counterfeiters was nearly at hand, when one day a closely veiled woman made application to see Luke Davis, one of the prisoners.

After having been searched by the matron she was admitted to his cell.

"Ah, Kate!" exclaimed the prisoner, as the woman confronted him, "I knew you would not fail me—you have come, and you have come prepared to comply with the request contained in my note. Is it not so?"

"I don't know," replied the woman, doggedly; "I have hardly made up my mind. You have not used me well, Luke, and yet at our last interview you accused me of acting unfairly by you."

"You didn't give me your full confidence, Kate, when that affair took place years ago. You didn't tell me who had employed you to make away with the baby. If you had I could have made a nice stake."

"Yes," replied the woman; "you would have pursued a course which would have consigned us both to a prison cell. Or if you had succeeded in getting the stake you speak of you would have spent it upon the woman for whom you deserted me, your lawful wife."

The woman spoke bitterly and bit her lip till the blood started.

"Don't speak of that, Kate," pleaded the man; "let bygones be bygones. I never loved her—I never loved any woman but you."

"I wish I could believe that," ejaculated the woman, in a tone approaching ecstasy. "Oh, if I only could believe that, Luke. My love for you has never wavered. Notwithstanding all your cruelty, and neglect, and recklessness, I have loved you always."

"You may believe it, Kate," replied the man, in a tone of apparent earnestness; "in spite of all that has passed you may believe me. I loved you then and I love you now, and if you will only assist in getting me clear of this charge I will go with you to any quarter of the globe which you may name, and we will never separate again."

"I will trust you, Luke," rejoined the woman, as she laid her hand upon his arm and gazed earnestly into his face; "and now how large a sum do you think will be necessary to clear you?"

"It is impossible to say," returned Luke Davis. "How large a sum do you think you can get out of the old lady? Will she bleed freely?"

"She will have to," replied the housekeeper, confidently; "she is rich, and murder is a serious charge. I had thought of forcing her to give me ten thousand pounds. With this sum, if I had not met you, I intended to bury myself in seclusion somewhere and live at ease. I think I can force her to give me ten thousand pounds. This will grieve her, without doubt, for she is naturally stingy; but it will not grieve her half so much as has the loss of her daughter. Oh, how that wrung her proud heart. It was a glorious revenge."

And she set her teeth spitefully.

"Ten thousand pounds!" exclaimed Luke Davis, in a sort of rapt ecstasy. "That is indeed a noble sum! One fiftieth of that amount will secure my acquittal, and on the interest of what is left we can live respectably for the rest of our lives. But you must

be careful, Kate. Do not attempt to get the entire sum at once, or you may ruin all. Desperation will sometimes render a person bold who, if treated with judgment, would be as plastic as putty. You must approach her gently and get what you can from time to time. Humour her till I am out of limbo, and then when we are ready to leave for parts unknown you can make the grand strike, and it will, without doubt, be successful. The money once in our possession we can take our departure, and have nothing to fear for the future."

"Your advice is good," rejoined the housekeeper, "and I will follow it. But, Luke, dear Luke, can I trust you?"

"Try me!" exclaimed the prisoner, with great apparent sincerity; "try me, Kate! I have not used you well, I admit, but when I left you I thought you cared nothing for me. I have knocked about the world long enough now, and long for rest. I know the value of a home and a good wife, and I will be true to you for ever!"

(To be continued.)

LADY CHETWYND'S SPECTRE.

CHAPTER LV.

YOUNG Lady Chetwynd did not lose her presence of mind as Flack, springing from the cab, barred her farther progress down the street. He recognized her even as she did him. With a great oath and with outstretched hands he sprang forward to intercept her.

But with the quickness of a flash Bernice wheeled and ran in the direction she had come, passing the lodging-house from which she had just escaped.

She had barely passed when Mrs. Crowl and the landlady, in a panic, came out of the house and swiftly descended the steps in search of her.

Flack and the two women bounded in pursuit of the young fugitive.

The hour was yet early, but the sky was fast darkening and a fine mist was beginning to fall. A gas lamp or two flickered through the wet. There were few people in the street.

Bernice had a brief start of her pursuers and flew on like some mad creature.

She turned the nearest corner instinctively, ran a short distance, and turned a second corner before her pursuers appeared around the first.

It seemed to her that she had walked many miles when at last she came out upon a wide, well-lighted street, where omnibuses were running and cabs rattled swiftly up and down—a street lined with fine shops, and with plenty of promenaders, despite the fine mist that was falling.

This was Oxford Street.

Bernice mingled with the tide of pedestrians, and a feeling of safety and security replaced her late terror.

Her sash was on her arm. She drew it on over her shoulders, adjusted her hat, and walked on very slowly.

At last, very tired, Bernice stopped at the window of a stationer's shop—the most extensive in Oxford Street.

There was a little throng of people about the windows, and a carriage stood before one of the doors.

Bernice leaned wearily against the window frame half hidden under a big blue cotton umbrella, which was in the hand of a tall countryman beside her.

Was it fate that had brought Bernice to that door at that moment?

She was standing there, seeing only the mellow lights within, when the shop door opened and a gentleman and lady came out into the street, escorted to the carriage door by the polite shop attendant, who held an umbrella above them.

The lady and gentleman were Lord Chetwynd and Sylvia Monk!

Bernice started with a low cry and grew very white as she recognized her husband and Miss Monk, and she watched their progress to the carriage with an eagerness that was strangely pitiful.

The marquess entered the carriage.

The footman closed the door, and ascended to his place.

The shop attendant stood uncovered in the rain. At the last moment a shopman came running out to make some inquiry upon a point that had been overlooked. He addressed himself to Miss Monk. The marquess thus being left free, looked out of the window with a casual glance.

At the same moment he uttered a wild cry and grew ghastly white.

Then he burst open the carriage door frantically and bounded into the street.

He had seen in the full light of the shop window a face shining out of the thin mist—the face of his lost Bernice. It was pale and wan, but gloriously beautiful with the beauty he had thought an angel's. The brown eyes were looking at him with a pitiful

entreaty; the eager, sweet noble face was beaming with a love and tenderness he recognized at a glance; the dusky hair floated beneath the battered and limp little hat in a black cloud.

He bounded toward her, but, with a quick, panting cry like a sob, Bernice vanished before him in the rain and the tide of pedestrians.

He ran along the street after her. He looked in the shops; he was wild for a moment; his very soul was in a tumult; he called her name even, regardless of the curious passers, but she did not answer. He did not see her, she had disappeared.

Convinced that she had escaped him, he returned to the carriage.

Meanwhile Bernice was in the street, wandering on aimlessly, not knowing which way to go.

A little later she came out into a square, dingy and gloomy enough at best, but now dark and dreary with its spectral gas-lights and rows of frowning buildings on every side.

This was Soho Square.

Bernice crossed the square and passed into a narrow street beyond.

She could hear the rattle of Oxford Street omnibuses and cabs a little distance away, but this narrow street upon which she had entered of Soho Square was very quiet.

The houses were mostly darkened.

From one house alone, the lower floor of which was apparently occupied as a shop, streamed a broad glare of light which was strangely alluring.

Bernice crossed the street towards the light, which somehow to her, at that moment, seemed to imply also warmth and comfort. It streamed from the wide window of a pastry-cook's shop.

Over the door was suspended a sign with the letters painted upon it in gilt: "Pierre Bongateau, French Confectioner."

Bernice paused before the confectioner's window and looked in.

The window was filled with iced-cakes of sumptuous appearance. There were fruit cakes black under the snowy coverings, bridal cakes in pyramidal shape surmounted by sugar temples, Cupids, flowers, wreaths, and spires of marvellous construction and beauty, the triumph of the confectioner's art.

Bernice's glance went beyond the cakes, seeing the interior of the shop.

"How pleasant it is in there!" thought Bernice, looking vainly for the shopman or other occupant of the establishment. "I'd like a cup of coffee. It is a French shop; the name is Pierre Bongateau. Was not Fifi's name Bongateau? I think so. Her father was a pastrycook living in Soho Square or just out of it. Was that Soho Square back yonder? Perhaps this is Fifi's father's shop."

She continued to look into the room with longing eyes.

The shopwoman was French, as was apparent at a glance. She wore a trimly fitting black dress, a jaunty little white apron, trimmed with cherry ribbons, and a coquettish little white cap, with a cherry ribbon in that also. The dark, sallow face under the cap with bright black eyes and vivacious expression, struck Bernice as being strangely familiar.

It was—yes, it was Fifi's, her former maid.

"She is going to shut up," murmured Bernice. "And then I shall be doubly alone. Fifi loved me. She was good-hearted. I am very tired. I wonder if she would give me shelter to-night, and not betray me to any one. I wish I dared go in."

What should she do?

She watched Fifi with a fascinating gaze. At one moment she was on the point of entering the shop, the next she shrank back affrighted, not daring to reveal herself.

The question was presently decided for her. A noisy party of young men came out of Oxford Street, approaching her. As they drew near they espied her, and one of them, with a drunken laugh, endeavored to peer into the girl's face.

"Let's see your face, my beauty," he hiccupped.

"What—ah? Here, boys, is something new. A girl actually shy, although she's in London streets alone at this hour. Bah! she's acting. I'll have a kiss. Now for it!"

He put out his arm to clasp her waist. With a stifled scream Bernice sprang away from him and ran into the pastrycook's shop, the bell on the door ringing loudly.

Fifi turned towards the new comer and glanced also out of the door. She comprehended the cause of the sudden and abrupt ingress.

"Sit down, mademoiselle," she said, in her soft French accent. "The men will soon be gone. You are safe here."

Bernice's hair veiled her face. She flung it back with a sudden gesture, and pushed back her shabby, limp little hat, and stood revealed, pale, despairing, yet wondrously beautiful.

"Fifi," she said, softly, "you think me dead. I am changed, I know; but don't you know me?"

The voice was recognized sooner than the lovely face.

Fifi staggered back with a great gasp, and then, believing that she looked upon a veritable spectre, gave a piercing scream and fell to the floor in a swoon.

CHAPTER LXI.

THE noisy and lawless young men, whose insults had driven Bernice to seek refuge in the French confectioner's shop, passed on when they saw their intended victim enter the shop door. No one in the house was aroused by the screams of Fifi. Lady Chetwynd and her former maid were absolutely alone together. Bernice then devoted herself with all haste to the recovery of the Frenchwoman.

Her efforts were soon rewarded by the gradual return of Fifi to consciousness.

The Frenchwoman gave a great gasp similar to that she had given when fainting, and opened her eyes only to close them again tightly, and to repeat her scream with added vigour and fierceness.

Lady Chetwynd stooped over the recumbent figure, and said, in a tone of gentle authority:

"Hush, Fifi. You will have the police here in a moment more. Compose yourself. Can you not comprehend that I am Lady Chetwynd?"

"It is marvellous!" replied Fifi. "But if you are really my lady, why are you here alone at this hour? Where is my lord?"

"Fifi, I have need of a friend. I have no home, no shelter even for to-night. I had no intention of seeking you. I came upon you by chance. Will you give me a night's shelter, and will you keep my secret, Fifi? I desire that no one, not even Lord Chetwynd, shall know that I live."

"I promise—I swear it," said Fifi, in an awestruck voice. "But, my lady, I cannot understand how it is that you live and that my lord does not know it."

"I will explain. Remember that you are bound by an oath to keep my secret. But, first, are we alone?"

And Lady Chetwynd glanced toward the door of the rear parlour.

"Yes, my lady, we are alone in the house. The good father and mother went to the French theatre to-night, and I am alone in charge. I am a lady's-maid now as before, my lady, but my mistress is at the opera this evening, and I am privileged to remain here until eleven o'clock. You can speak freely, my lady—no one will hear us."

She then gave an account of her rescue from the tomb by Monk, her flight under his guidance, and the projected marriage between the marquis and Miss Monk, adding:

"I have tried to get a situation as governess or to get lodgings. I have but threepence in my pocket to-night, and I am shelterless."

"Not shelterless while Fifi's lives, my lady. I will keep your secret. No hypocrisy or mock sympathy can drag it from me now," exclaimed the Frenchwoman, volubly. "Ah, my lady, you were kind to me, and I do not forget it. I wish I might live with you again, although I have a good mistress now. You shall stay here, my lady, until you can get a situation. My room is unused here, and you shall have it. The good father and mother need not suspect who you are, my lady. Let them think you Miss Gwyn, a new lodger, a lady I used to know. Shall it be so?"

"If you please, Fifi. You comfort me."

"And you need comfort, poor infant!" said Fifi, rubbing her eyes industriously. "Was ever such sorrow, such romance, such despair? Ah, my lady, the false husband shall not find you here. You are safe here. It may be that I can get you a situation as companion, my lady," she said, with a start and a sudden flash. "And then I could serve you still, though secretly. My mistress has sought a companion of accomplishments for a month past. She wants a young lady who can sing and play the pianoforte and read French—a dressed-up lady, whom she will treat as a lady; for, with all her proud, cold ways, my mistress is a lady to her heart's core. I will recommend you to her as Miss Gwyn, my former mistress, in reduced circumstances, and she has such faith in me that she will gladly engage you. I have been with her since the week after your ladyship died—that is, was buried."

"I'll speak to Lady Diana this very night, and to-morrow, my lady, you shall be in your new home."

"I shall never forget your goodness to me, Fifi. I know you will keep my secret. I feel a strange, new sense of security here."

A sound of the rattling of heavy wooden shutters was now heard.

"It is my father," said Fifi. "He is putting up the shutters. The father and mother have returned from the theatre, and I must go soon to my mistress. I will wait to commend your ladyship to the care of the good mother."

The shop door was pushed open, the bell ringing.

Fifi's parents had returned.

Lady Chetwynd rose up, taking off her limp little hat, and awaited their appearance.

Fifi ran and opened the door leading into the shop, and called out, volubly:

"Is it you, my father? Hasten this way. I have a guest to consign to your care before I leave. Come!"

(To be continued.)

ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN.—Young men, let the nobleness of your mind impel you to its improvement. You are too strong to be defeated, save by yourselves. Refuse to live merely to eat and sleep. Brutes can do this, but you are men. Act the part of men. Prepare yourselves to endure toil. Resolve to rise, you have but to resolve. Nothing can hinder your success if you determine to succeed. Do not waste your time by wishing and dreaming, but go earnestly to work. Let nothing discourage you. If you have no books, borrow them; if you have no teachers, teach yourself; if your early education has been neglected, by the greater diligence repair the defect.

PUNCTUALITY.—We admire punctuality, and we can have but little patience with those persons who are so regardless of it, even in little things, as to continually break their word, under the impression that "it is of no consequence, it will all be understood, and amount to the same thing in the end;" as many often say, to excuse their everlasting habit of being false to their word. There are some people who seldom or never do as they promise. They habituate themselves to promise anything and everything, without the least thought of fulfilment. We could name some persons of this sort who in other respects are worthy people; but they cannot command confidence, because their word is not regarded. We can mention young men of promise who are constantly losing ground with their acquaintances, solely by being inattentive to their obligations and promises in little things. A man will soon ruin himself in this way. In all business transactions, in all intercourse with friends, in all engagements, let all be exactly as they say—be punctual at the minute. That is the way to make other people so and to make them trust us.

THE THAMES FORTS.—The forts on the Thames are now rapidly approaching completion. The progress made and the solidity of the work are amazing. Indeed none but those who have visited the strongest fortresses on the Continent can form any proper idea of the strength of these batteries. Built in a horse-shoe form they each present from twenty to twenty-five embrasures to the river, and as there are four of them, each commanding the other, the strength accumulated may be approximately guessed. Already it has been decided not to use the Moncrieff gun-carriage. In place of the arrangement at first proposed iron shields of immense thickness have been mounted, and where it was at first intended to place eighteen-ton guns Woolwich Infants of thirty-five tons are ordered. From the water these forts are to all intents and purposes unassailable; their only weak point is landward, and it is now under serious consideration whether on the Essex side of the river another battery shall be erected on the Laindon Hills, so as to prevent an advance by land upon the Coal House Fort, while on the Kent side a corresponding redoubt shall be erected in a similarly commanding position. The idea at first was that troops would meet the enemy by land, and that as river batteries the forts would have nothing to do with the shore; but it is now thought necessary to supplement them with purely land forts on the surrounding eminences.

AN UNSINKABLE BOAT.—Place a handful of shot into a Florence flask closed with a perforated cork, and set the vessel floating upon water, and some idea may be gained of the appearance and principle of Tolson's Unsinkable Boat, which has within the last few days been tried in the Rotten Park Reservoir, Birmingham. As might be expected, the machine is said to be startlingly ugly. It is made of strong iron boiler plates bolted together, fitted interiorly with lockers, seats, and a table, and capable of holding sixteen persons. A kind of window at the side affords the means of ingress and egress, and can be closed securely by an iron slide. Pipes from above supply air and exclude water, while if by accident any water should enter, a double-action pump gets rid of it. The space between the level flooring and the bottom is heavily loaded, and it is claimed that the "boat" will preserve its equilibrium in any sea. Owing to a want of ballast on the first trial, the crew received frequent duckings, but this omission was subsequently rectified, though the vessel was not fitted with the steering apparatus, sails, and out-water, which form part of the design. It is to be hoped that a future trial may be made on the open sea, and the good points of the invention thus be brought out far more forcibly than they can be by experiments on the smooth surface of a reservoir.



[A COLD RECEPTION.]

MR. MAVERICK'S MYSTERY.

MISS AYTOUN looked up from her writing to take the card, repeating to herself, in a puzzled undertone, the name upon it—"Gerald Maverick."

Laying the card upon her desk, she rose, and, after the manner of women, turned for a moment to the glass, as if to satisfy herself concerning the impression she should make upon her visitor, who or whatever he might be.

There could be little question at any time about Miss Aytoun's impression. She had a high-bred face, a somewhat haughty manner, an air of self-reliant repose. She was always well dressed—on very cheap things sometimes, but she "set them off," as milliners say.

Apparently satisfied, she went quietly down to the small parlour to meet Mr. Maverick.

Mr. Maverick had paced the length of the room several times during Miss Aytoun's brief delay, and, turning suddenly at her entrance, he made her a bow which included a cold stare of scrutiny.

"Miss Alice Aytoun?" he inquired, simply.

"I am Miss Aytoun, sir."

"And I am Mr. Maverick," he said, with an imitation of her cold tone.

"So I presumed from your card, sir."

"I have a little business with you, Miss Aytoun, which will, I trust, justify my intrusion. Will you do me the favour to sit down?"

The interview up to this point had been a brief conflict—the conflict between a haughty man who comes to grant a favour and a proud woman who knows herself in a position to need one. The woman conquered. Mr. Maverick placed a chair when he proffered his request with all the courtly grace of which he was capable.

"I have been told, madam," he began, "that you wish a situation as governess. Being an entire stranger to you, I will mention that Dr. Hawthorne was my informant. Am I correct?"

Miss Aytoun bowed. A hot glow spread for a moment over her fine white skin, not, as her visitor conjectured, from any false shame because she was brought to the pass to go out to earn her bread, but from another motive which she herself could hardly have defined, unless as surprise that Dr. Hawthorne, of all persons, should be the one to put a chance to go away into her very hands.

"I have such a situation to offer," continued Mr. Maverick, "to the right person."

And he waited, as if to afford her an opportunity to present her credentials.

A certain repugnance had gathered in Miss Aytoun's mind while he was speaking.

"I hope," she said, with a chilly smile, "that Dr. Hawthorne did not describe me as a 'right person.' I am entirely untrained and untried. The necessity for work has only lately come to me—of work for strangers that is. I should not care to take a situation where the exactions or responsibilities were great."

Mr. Maverick listened with his head thrown backward, his eyes partly closed. The clear cadences of her voice affected him like music.

"What I have to propose to you," he went on, overlooking what she had said, "is the care of a young girl—young lady—my orphan ward, Miss Fane. Miss Fane has a large fortune and great beauty, but she is of an extremely sensitive organization. She has never been able to study—is quite deficient, in fact, for her age. For the last three years I have been travelling with her abroad. I am now hoping to procure a companion whose influence will be fortunate over her, and who will succeed in imparting, orally, some of the instruction she cannot acquire from books."

He paused, and Miss Aytoun was also silent. She was unconsciously studying her visitor's hard, handsome face, with its lines of pride and scars of suffering.

"This is a delicate task, Mr. Maverick," she said,

at length, "which you propose to confide to a stranger."

"It is a delicate task," he replied. "There are few people to whom I could have proposed it—as I do to you."

Again Miss Aytoun was silent. She was pondering how she had said to Julian Hawthorne the other day, "No; I cannot marry you. I cannot settle down to this humdrum life in Brighton. My aunt's death leaves me at liberty at last. The world is wide and I must see it. I have energy which consumes me, and longings which starve me. I should make you a miserable wife." She was pondering these words, and wondering if she had actually meant them.

"You are considering my proposal, Miss Aytoun?"

"No, sir, I was not. I think I must reject it."

"May I ask why?"

"Because it seems to involve an undefined, undefinable kind of duty which would oppress me."

"I think drudgery would oppress you more."

"Possibly. But I could drudge conscientiously."

"But could not conscientiously undertake the care of a girl who, despite her rare favours, is yet sorely afflicted."

"How afflicted, Mr. Maverick?"

"Have I not given you to understand? Miss Fane is unapparently but really deficient in intellect. At seventeen she is like a child of seven."

"I should not do her justice."

Mr. Maverick rose impatiently. In an absent way he replaced the chair he had occupied, and turned suddenly upon his hostess.

"Miss Aytoun, will it influence you if I beseech you to try the experiment?"

"I do not understand your determination, sir. There are plenty of women who would be glad of the place you offer."

"But I want a lady—a lady like yourself, Miss Aytoun. There is every inducement—a large salary, a home of which you will be mistress, and a labour which I truly believe you will find a labour of love."

"Did I understand that Dr. Hawthorne was a friend of yours, Mr. Maverick?" Alice inquired, abruptly.

"He is," replied her visitor, with a faint startle.

"Then, if you please, I will send you my answer after I have seen him."

"I shall hope that it will be favourable," Mr. Maverick said, lifting his hat and gloves.

And once more he surveyed Miss Aytoun with a half-reverent kind of wonder, from which all trace of hauteur had slipped like a mask.

Alice sat still in the small parlour in which the funeral dimness still lingered. What she had wanted was time to consider rather than time to consult. The chance for work and independence, for which she had asked, had come to her. It was not just the sort of work she would have chosen. Mr. Maverick's persistency, and Mr. Maverick himself, had conveyed to her mind some sense of a hidden trouble which he sought to have her lighten or share—a sense of mystery or concealment produced she knew not how, but it caused a vague uneasiness. But after all she might be fanciful; recent events had unhinged her nerves. At any rate there was no probability of wrong-doing in which she could become involved.

She sat still, turning the matter in her mind, till dusk brought old Katherine with the lighted candles, and the lighted candles brought Dr. Hawthorne.

His daily call had become a matter of habit during the elder Miss Aytoun's protracted illness; and when that illness terminated in death, and it was found that the little fortune which should have come to Alice had been left to a foreign mission, it seemed only natural that so old a friend as the doctor should continue to bestow his attention and care.

His offer of marriage even seemed but a natural sequence. Alice came very near accepting it, as a matter of course. But just at that point something restrained her, and what she answered was what returned to her during her interview with Mr. Maverick.

"I have been offered a situation as governess this afternoon, Julian," she said, abruptly, to her visitor. He was placing some delicate ferns which he had brought with some scarlet berries and leaves in a white vase on the mantel.

"Yes?" he said, inquiringly, turning towards her with an anxious pallor in his face.

Miss Aytoun was looking straight before her, seeing the two men with whom she had been talking—Mr. Maverick, with his courtly arrogance and command, his stilted, cultured face with its bronze-like beauty, the lock of raven hair falling upon the high brow, the eagle eyes, the slim white hand, and Dr. Hawthorne, square and loosely knit, good, patient, commonplace.

"How unlike they are," she said, dreamily, to herself. "What do you know of Mr. Maverick? It seems that you do know him," she said, aloud.

"Not much, except in a professional way, Alice."
 "And the girl, Miss Fane?"
 "I have never seen her," he answered, as if it relieved him to say so. "Maverick is rich and unmarried," he went on; "his place is like a palace. He has not lived there though for several years."
 "You have been there then? How far is it from Brightbrook?"

"Twenty miles or so. About an hour's ride. Do you mean to go there, Alice?"
 "Why not? I must go somewhere!"

"Not must go."
 "Yes, Julian, must. Since Aunt Aytoun thought her Polynesian pots of more value than my ease."
 "You might have loved me, Alice, if you had tried."

"I have tried, Julian," she repeated, quite soberly; "it does not come for trying."
 It was settled, therefore, that Alice should try the experiment at Maverick Place.

Dr. Hawthorne rode his rounds in his gig, with an unspeakable pathos in his eyes and patience in his heart, and Alice Aytoun turned her back upon the humdrum security of her past for a glimpse of the wide, wide world.

It was towards the close of a dull November afternoon that, according to her appointment, she stepped from the train at the station, and in a moment was receiving Mr. Maverick's greeting as he led her towards the carriage in waiting.

"Miss Aytoun, I cannot yet make you understand how great a favour I feel you are conferring. I have sought so long and so vainly for one who answered my ideal as a companion for Geraldine that I have almost despaired. Now I hope for everything. And it will not take many days for you to discover how much ground I have for hope and for fear."

Enigmatic words these were, and over them Miss Aytoun pondered long.

Maverick Place looked stately and solemn in the early dusk.

With an involuntary chill and dread Alice followed the owner up the broad steps, between the "cold stone lions" on guard.

Her footsteps had a shivering echo in her own ears as she crossed the marble floor, and, pausing behind Mr. Maverick at the threshold of the drawing-room, looked with wonder at the vision of beauty which advanced to meet them.

"Geraldine, this is our new friend, Miss Aytoun."

A large blonde, of the Greek type, with dazzling skin, brilliant eyes, and plaits of rare, abundant hair, clad in a dress of violet silk, with fine broad lace about the neck and wrist, was

Standing there, A daughter of the gods, divinely tall, and most divinely fair.

Exquisitely sensitive to beauty and harmony, Miss Aytoun's face lighted at this beautiful vision, and she eagerly extended her hand.

The girl bowed without noticing it, examining this "new friend" with a kind of angry scorn.

"You were to find me a mother, and you have brought me a rival," she said, rapidly, to Mr. Maverick, in a tone too low for Miss Aytoun's ears.

"Geraldine, I forbid you to offend her," he replied, equally low.

"Offend her! I would kill her, if—"

Mr. Maverick placed his hand upon her wrist.
 "Will you show Miss Aytoun her room now?" he said, in a tone of quiet authority. "It is time for dinner."

Alice laid off her bonnet, smoothed her hair before the glass, and immediately returned to the drawing-room. Miss Fane was standing beside her guardian, with her hand upon his shoulder.

"Now," she said, maliciously, "we shall prove whether three really does spoil company."

"The test will not be long enough to be fair," replied Mr. Maverick, placing a chair for Alice before the fire. "Next week you and Miss Aytoun can enjoy yourselves without the restraint of a third person."

She looked at him in a dazed way for a minute.
 "You—are not going to leave me?" she said, piteously, holding her two fair palms imploringly toward him.

"You know, my child, that I have only waited for Miss Aytoun's coming to enable me to go."

A fierce light leaped to the brilliant blue eyes.
 "And so you consign me to a keeper? Heartless! cruel!" and her bosom swelled and throbbed with passion.

"Miss Aytoun, you are tired," he said, wearily, overlooking Geraldine's excitement.

"Yes," and there was an hysterical constriction in her own throat.

"A cup of coffee may refresh you," and, offering her his arm, he led the way to the dining-room and placed her at the head of the table.

After dinner Mr. Maverick went to the library, and the ladies returned to the parlour.

Alice saw in her charge only a passionate, wilful child, who excited her pity and contempt. She was asking herself the question, could she live with such a person, in such an atmosphere? while Geraldine walked slowly up and down the room, with folded arms and drooped head, her long bright plaits falling below her waist against the violet silk, whose train crept in sumptuous folds along the heavy carpet.

Suddenly confronting Miss Aytoun, she said, passionately:

"And now I want to know what brought you here."

Alice fixed her great black eyes upon her face.

"I was brought here, Miss Fane, solely by the desire to be of use to you. I begin to fear that will be impossible."

She quavered a little at the steady tone, but she still laughed insolently.

"Ah, yes, they have told you I am a simpleton—that I can't learn books. Well, what do I want of the stupid things? I am clever enough without them to foil the woman, be she who she may, who comes here thinking to steal Geraldine's heart away from me."

"Miss Fane," Alice answered, "whatever your attainments may be your own delicacy ought to teach you that your words are an insult, and not to be borne by a lady."

She was unconsciously severe, and Geraldine's nerve suddenly failed.

"Don't scold me," she said, with a childish cringe; "he said he should be angry if I offended you. And, oh, Miss Aytoun, I would rather die than make him angry—I would rather die a thousand deaths than displease him, or have him think that any one could be so necessary to him as I am."

"Miss Fane," said Alice, "are you engaged to Mr. Maverick?"

She flamed again.

"That is none of your business. Mr. Maverick is is nothing to you." Then, cringing again, "Dear Miss Aytoun, don't mind me. Oh, if you knew how I loved him!"

Mr. Maverick's entrance interrupted this painful scene.

During the week which ensued Miss Aytoun found it impossible to obtain a moment's private conversation with him. Geraldine watched her like a cat, and in her presence she could not express herself with any freedom.

Nothing but a sense of shame prevented her from relinquishing her engagement and getting from Maverick Place with all speed. But she said to herself that doubtless every position had its trials, and she would not be so childish as to retreat at the first mole-hill she met.

Moreover, a most pathetic pity for Mr. Maverick crept into her heart as days wore on. She saw that Geraldine's passion was none of his seeking; that, on the contrary, its evidences were intensely painful. She read the sufferings of his furrowed face with a longing to somehow appease and soothe his troubles; and, hoping against hope, she bent the energies of her strength to bear upon Geraldine's weakness.

The days were long and dull after Mr. Maverick's departure. Geraldine, deprived of her one source of excitement in his presence, lapsed into a kind of Oriental passivity. She slept, ate, played, like a child. Her mind was always as though involved in a mist. Her memory was obscure and imperfect, her intellect dormant. Only her emotional nature was susceptible of animation, and of that, for good or ill, Geraldine held the key.

Miss Aytoun struggled to preserve her own clear brain and calm blood. She tried to arrange her time and occupy her thoughts as she was accustomed to do. But there was something like fatality in the air of Maverick Place, a loneliness that was appalling. The servants performed their duties in a kind of stealthy silence and slipped away at the earliest moment to their own apartments. No visitors came, no tradesmen. The great house, half of which remained an unexplored region to Miss Aytoun, was like an enchanted castle wrapped in some unspoken mystery.

Miss Aytoun felt this without defining it. She wondered day by day who Geraldine might be, living isolated in his wealth? who his ward might be, with her wondrous beauty and clouded brain? Her position oppressed her as she had suspected. She felt herself growing weak-nerved, startled at the slamming of unused doors, at the creaking of planks in floors which were untrampled.

It was a relief when a letter came announcing Mr. Maverick's return. Geraldine's ridiculous jealousy was annoying, but the dreariness was worse.

"This is a lonely life for you, Miss Aytoun," said the gentleman, the evening of his return. "You

are actually growing thin," and his look of concern brought the blood suddenly to Alice's face.

"Mr. Maverick," she answered, "I must take the opportunity to tell you that the life is one I cannot continue to lead. I have only waited for your return to express my regrets and resign my situation."

"What is the matter, Miss Aytoun?" he inquired, briefly. "Are you not comfortable? Is there anything that annoys you?"

"I am doing nothing to earn my salary—that annoys me."

"Doing nothing? I think you have saved me from insanity. You do not know the value of this respite which your presence here has enabled me to enjoy. You do not know the horror of being tied as I am."

"I think I do, Mr. Maverick. I have even felt my brief confinement here severely. But you must remember it was on Miss Fane's account that I came, and so far from benefiting her she has taken such a dislike to me that I think my presence injures her."

Mr. Maverick buried his face in his hands.

"What shall I do?" he murmured. "She dislikes every one."

"No, sir; she does not dislike you. Her liking for you is so intense that I believe you would unfold her capacities as no other has the power to do."

"Miss Aytoun, you would not suggest that I must devote my life to this infatuated, unfortunate girl?"

"I make no suggestions. I know nothing of the nature of her claim upon you."

"That is true. You know nothing. Her claim is great."

"Then do not ignore it."

"You know nothing of what you are talking. Miss Aytoun, for you—you to tell me this, is torture."

"I did not mean to pain you, sir, nor to presume by giving advice."

"Presume!" he repeated. "Do not use such words. It is I who must presume, for I cannot resist telling you that it is you who have made Geraldine's claim too intolerable for me to bear. I was resigned to it until I saw you and knew you. Since then but one miserable thought possesses me—that she stands for ever between us."

"Mr. Maverick, I beseech you—"

Alice had risen, shocked, pained, and, it must be said, deeply touched. As the words came to her lips she perceived in the opposite doorway the form of Geraldine looking, some way, smaller, older.

The form paused a minute, the white palms were spread outward piteously, and Geraldine's voice, heart-broken, hushed into a sort of sob, faltered "You love her," the words piercing the stillness like something cold and sharp.

Mr. Maverick sprang to his feet and turned, it seemed threateningly, toward the receding figure.

"Yes," he cried, hoarsely, "I love her. I love her!" He sank once more into his chair. "Oh, miserable sowing which brings such reaping! Oh, horrible mystery! Oh, unhappy Maverick!"

Miss Aytoun had slipped from the room and gained her own. It had all come out worse than she feared. Why had she ever left Brightbrook—and Julian Hawthorne? Mr. Maverick touched her heart only to cut it. Would that she were safe away.

But departure was to be more difficult than she supposed. When tea-time came she went to Geraldine's room, preferring not to run the risk of meeting Mr. Maverick again alone.

To her surprise she found her pupil in bed. She had been nearly crazy with headache all the afternoon, and had decided not to go down to tea.

"But you were up an hour or two ago?" Alice asked.

"No; I undressed directly after dinner," and the maid who was with her confirmed her words.

Who, then, had Alice seen and heard in the doorway? Who had been witness to Mr. Maverick's mad declaration? Miss Aytoun began to wonder if she was losing her senses.

She sent her apologies with those of her pupil to Mr. Maverick, and allowed him to take his tea in solitude.

In the privacy of her chamber she tried to calm her own excitement. How she had longed for excitement in the old days of monotonous attendance upon Miss Aytoun—days passed in a dull routine of duties, whose only interest was a clipping and paring her tasteless occupations so as to make time for reading or study.

To think then of having books enough and time enough had been like picturing Paradise. To have fancied a lover like Geraldine, a home like Maverick Place, would have exceeded her wildest romance. And now she looked back upon that period of calm, prosaic contentment as on a golden

dream from which the present was a feverish awakening.

Of Mr. Maverick's confession she scarcely allowed herself to think. Unquestionably it was one he had no right to make. Too evidently circumstances had fettered him with a claim to which his own longings must yield.

Miss Aytoun speculated upon the nature of this claim. For the first time the resemblance of Miss Fane's Christian name to Mr. Maverick's struck her fancy. Who was Geraldine? Whence her unnatural passion for a man whom she had been educated to regard as a father?

Perturbed by thoughts like these, Miss Aytoun finally went to bed and to sleep.

Her chamber was warmed by a soft coal fire in the grate, and having been replenished during the evening it lighted her room for the most of the night.

She had slept, she thought, about an hour when a sense of brightness in the apartment disturbed her, and she opened her eyes to find the blaze of a lighted candle falling upon her face.

"What is the matter, Geraldine? Are you ill?" cried Miss Aytoun, springing up in bed.

Her visitor shook her head with a smile, and at once extinguished the candle. Alice had had time, however, to receive the impression that Geraldine's face had had an unnatural expression and to wonder if she could be walking in her sleep.

She reached out to touch her, and she glided away like a somnambulist or a ghost toward the door of a passage leading to Geraldine's room, and, pausing a moment on the threshold, said, as though repeating to herself a lesson she wished to learn, "He loves her, he loves her," and disappeared.

Miss Aytoun lighted her own candle, thrust her feet into her slippers, and threw a shawl about her shoulders, as quickly as possible. When, however, she reached Geraldine's room the girl was sleeping calmly in her bed. Her cheeks were flushed, her lips slightly parted, while a moment before her face had worn to Alice a pinched outline and pallid hue.

She stood beside her long enough to satisfy herself that her slumber was not feigned, and then regained her bed in an unquiet frame of mind.

Had she been deluded in supposing that any one had entered her room? Had she grown so nerveless and fanciful as that? The headache she had feigned the night before was a reality when daylight came at last, and she did not attempt to rise till noon.

After a light dinner, from which Mr. Maverick was absent, she took a long, bracing walk. She spent the evening in reading two or three newspapers and writing a commonplace letter. At nine she retired, taking care to lock the door between her room and Geraldine's, as well as the one opening upon the hall.

She fell asleep readily, the room lighted by the fire, as on the preceding evening. And again, at about the same hour, she was awakened by the blaze of a candle held close to her face, and sprang up to find her nocturnal visitor standing beside her as before.

This time, however, she felt that the face and form were not Geraldine's. The form was slighter, lower the face thinner and older. It was like Geraldine, blighted, so to speak.

Miss Aytoun did not scream, though, truth to tell, her heart quailed with fright and horror. She knew that she was wide awake, possessed of all her senses.

What this apparition was she knew not. Just as on the previous night, the candle was extinguished almost as she opened her eyes, and just in the same manner the intruder, whom she saw to be barefooted and clad in her nightdress, retreated slowly towards the door as before; again repeated the self-same words, again disappeared, and Miss Aytoun distinctly heard the key turned in the lock and withdrawn.

She did not offer to follow. She was paralyzed with fright.

The long winter night wore away without her closing her eyes. She could not subject herself to the shock of such another awakening.

As soon as the servants were astir she rose and dressed and repaired to the library, where Mr. Maverick was accustomed to spend an hour before breakfast, and where she was secure of interruption from Geraldine, who was a late riser.

A faint look of surprise mingled with a keen one of pleasure crossed Mr. Maverick's face as, on entering the room, he discovered Miss Aytoun. A glance at her face, however, told him that her errand was not a pleasant one.

"You were waiting for me?" he said.

How different his manner and tone from that in which he had first addressed her.

"Yes, Mr. Maverick. I must go back to Brightbrook to-day."

He paused a moment.

"I cannot have you go," was his final answer,

"Ask any sacrifice, name any conditions, but do not leave here just at present."

"There are no conditions for me to name. I cannot stay here another day."

"What has happened? What ails you?" he asked, sharply.

"I cannot explain. I do not know. Only I must go at once."

Mr. Maverick approached where she stood. There was a fierce contention of despair and pride in his face.

"Miss Aytoun, I beseech you to let me know what has occurred."

"I believe that you do not need to ask me, Mr. Maverick. I believe some horrid mystery exists in this house, of which you must be aware. I do not seek to penetrate it, only to escape from it."

He sank into a chair, and covered his face with his hands.

"You are right," he said, hoarsely; "there is a mystery. You shall hear what it is, and judge between me and it, Alice Aytoun."

She made no motion of assent or refusal, feeling vaguely that what he would relate was the verdict, and he continued:

"Twenty years ago, Miss Aytoun, I was a young man like other men. I had my ambitions and hopes and dreams—and my love. The woman I loved was above me in every sense, and yet she loved me in return. But her fortune was large and mine was small. I was too proud to be endowed by a wife, and, having sealed a mutual compact of love and trust, I parted from her, hoping to enrich myself by perseverance and industry."

"Time passed by—years of arduous exertion but also of prosperity and sanguine hopes. Letters passed, not frequently, for that was impossible, but at intervals, which made them all the more precious when they came. I had intended to limit my absence to two years, and after the expiration of that time was hoping to start once more for home every month. It was greed of gain, I suppose, which kept me from time to time; disinclination to lose a good chance, anxiety to watch the issues of an investment; and it was finally three years and three months from the time of my departure when I once more found myself at home. I had given no warning of my coming, partly to prevent possible disappointment, partly to enjoy the surprise. Little I reckoned what sort of surprise it would be."

"Almost in the very hour of my arrival I made my way to the home of the woman whose welcome, as I fancied, was to atone for all the privations I had known. I rang the bell, and was ushered in. Externally there was but little change. My betrothed was an orphan, and the luxurious home she occupied was her own. I detected, perhaps, some additional air of luxury—that was all. It was morning—a bright winter day. I stood in the drawing-room waiting while the servant carried my name. All at once the door of the conservatory opened nearly opposite where I stood. I saw the woman I adored coming slowly toward me, quite unconscious of my presence. She held a slender basket of superb flowers—hot-house flowers, Miss Aytoun, whose scent I hate to this day. I stepped forward to meet her, my rapture and impatience glowing in my face. I see her as she paused—I like to re-enact the little drama, you see, sometimes. Her face blanched. She swayed and tottered, the blossoms fell to the floor. Transfixed by I know not what, I stood and devoured her with my eyes, never moving even as she fell heavily in a swoon. Some one shrieked, though I did not stir. In an instant two or three attendants were upon the scene. 'She has fainted,' I heard one say, and she added, 'Joseph, go at once for the doctor for Mrs. Fane.'

"Perhaps the story seems as clear to you now, Miss Aytoun, as it ever has to me. She gave me up, that was all I could make of it, and had been married six months to another man. There was nothing farther to be done or said."

"I turned back to where I had come from, and plunged deeper into the mire of money-getting. A year later my absorption was again disturbed by a summons home. The woman who had played me false had been widowed, and was now dead. And she had left me guardian of her twin daughters, administrators of their large estate. It was a singular charge. My heart did not warm to it, not even when I looked upon the helpless babies, then one year old, and saw them smile back in my face with their mother's beauty."

"Need I go on, Miss Aytoun? The children thus given to my care were—the one imbecile past hope, the other as you know her. Need I dwell farther upon this cruel past?"

"There are two, then? It is the other I have seen. Why was I not told this before?"

"I supposed," replied Mr. Maverick, "that you knew. I supposed Mr. Hawthorne would tell you,

Geraldine does not know her sister, because physicians have thought that communication would be injurious to such intellect as she possesses. That is the cause of the secrecy, the separate apartments, and all."

"And Julian thought, doubtless, that he might violate professional confidence if he made the disclosure. It has been made to me very painfully, Mr. Maverick."

And she told the story of two nights' unrest.

"You have every reason for wanting to leave me, Miss Aytoun."

"Yes; I must go."

"May I not say to you—"

"No—no."

"And yet there is no wrong that I have done, no reason why my life should be cast away."

"Mr. Maverick, these girls—this fearful and yet precious legacy, you could not put them aside—out of your way?"

His frame trembled with emotion.

"I think I could—for you."

"It may not be," she said, simply. "Dear friend

—for I must call you so—take up your burden; it will bring its reward. I, too, shall pray that you see your way clear through this inscrutable mystery."

So Alice Aytoun went back to Brightbrook. And married Dr. Hawthorne? No, she did not. She opened a school; she studied and worked and grew, and lived a worthy life, made glad by gracious deeds and loyal friendships.

Chiefest among these friendships are those of two men: Dr. Hawthorne, who makes his daily visits just the same year after year as in the days when Miss Aytoun needed his services and Alice was a dreaming girl; and Gerald Maverick, to whose genial home and graceful wife Alice is ever a welcome guest.

Mr. Maverick's mystery was nearer its elucidation than he knew when he laid it bare that hopeless morning to Miss Aytoun.

Neither of the twin sisters lived to reach her majority.

Remote heirs inherit their estates, and with their death Mr. Maverick could drop a veil over his past, and turn, as he has done, toward a future of opportunities befitting his nature and its needs.

W. H. P.

FACTETÆ.

An old conductor says he is no judge of female beauty, but he can always tell when the ladies are "passing fare."

FETCHING UP.—An old lady, upon taking her first ride in the train, remarked, when the train ran off the track: "You fetch up rather sudden, don't ye?"

"Titts engine won't work," said a fireman to the chief of the fire department. "No wonder," was the reply, "it was made to play."

"I SAY, Jim, which would you rather, that a lion tore you in pieces or a tiger?" "Why, you goose, of course I'd rather a lion tore a tiger in pieces."

A MATTER IN THIS CITY advertizes that "Watts on the Mind" is of great importance, but what's on the head is of greater.

ONE TO HIM.—It is evident why the Shah named the new order instituted for ladies only, "The Order of the Sun." That glorious luminary has a new and beautiful "get-up" daily.—*Fun.*

HOW TO MAKE BUTTER.—A five-year old boy told his mother how to make butter: "You just take a long stick with a cross at the end of it; then you get a big tub, and then you borrow a cow."

NICE EMPLOYMENT.—If "the recent Sugar Conference at Paris" was attended by gentlemen engaged in the public service, they must now know something by agreeable experience of the sweets of office.—*Punch.*

APPLIED SCIENCE.

Driver (to conductor): "My heyos, Bill! see that old gent! What a 'eavenly waterbut he'd make, if his 'ed was took off, and he was 'ollered out!"

ONE man wagered another that he had seen a horse galloping at a great speed and a dog sitting on his tail. It seems an improbable feat for a dog to accomplish; but the man was right and won the money. The dog was sitting on his own tail.

GLASS WITH CARE.—One pound reward is offered for a pair of "racing glasses" left in a hansom cab. The rightful owner seems to set very small store on his valuable property, as we would freely give a pound only to see them racing.—*Fun.*

CHIGNONS IN HORSESHAIR.—Ladies have proved themselves capable of practising medicine; would they not be likewise equal to the practice of the law, if they were eligible—and why should they not be? Nobody would be obliged to retain female counsel who did not choose; and if ladies of the long robe

remained briefless it would be their own affair. The bar, were it open to ladies, would possibly attract many, if not by the expectation of being made "dashing" black "serjeants" at least in the hope of obtaining a silk gown.—*Punch*.

AN ADMISSION.—Jones, a few months after his first baby was born, was holding it on his knee. His wife said, "Now confess, my dear, that you love the child!" "I can't do that," replied he, "but am willing to admit I respect the little thing for its father's sake."

FISHY NATURAL HISTORY.

Scene—Brighton Aquarium.

Jack: "I say, Tom, that old cod looks uncommonly dickey!"

Tom: "Dickey! I should think so, rather! What's a cod without oyster sauce?"—*Fun*.

AN UNROMANTIC FINISH.—A lady recently discovered that her daughter was about to elope. She didn't make any fuss about it, but the night on which the elopement was to take place gave her daughter an opiate in her tea so that the girl did not wake up till next morning. Meantime the lover had grown tired of waiting, and left in disgust.

EXHIBITIONS OF 1873.

Miss Clara Pensive (to her drawing master): "What an ugly model you must have had for that young lady in your picture, Mr. Pigment!"

Mr. Pigment: "Do you think so? My sister was the model."

Miss Clara Pensive: "Ah! Good gracious me! Yes, I ought to have known it, she is so like you."—*Fun*.

A SPECULATIVE BUTLER.—Rather a laughable incident took place on the entrance of the Shah into Paris. The Count and Countess of Manyacres had left Paris for the season, it was thought. They returned, however, suddenly on the day of the arrival of the Shah, and found the entire house in possession of strangers, who had been accommodated with a good sight of the Shah at so much a head by their speculative butler. It is a financing age.

THE SERVANTS.

Mistress: "Jane, remember you must go for the children at nine o'clock, as the party breaks up at that hour."

Under Nurse: "Please, 'm, I don't think I can get there till my Botany class is over, and that's seldom before half-past nine!"

[The Mistress of course "knew her place," and said no more!]—*Punch*.

A FLORIST'S TROUBLES.—A German florist, in a high state of irritation, related his troubles in this way. He said, "I have so much drouble with ladies when they come to buy rose; they wants him hardy, wants doubles, wants him moonly, wants him fragrant, wants him nice goular, wants him eberydings in von rose. But I have sometimes to say to ladies, 'Madame, I never often sees ladies vas beautiful, vas rich, vas good-temper, vas young, vas clever, vas perfection in von. I see her not!'"

THE REDEEMING FEATURE.

Sandie McFiddlefaddle from "ayent the Tweed," located in a Southron village, has somehow managed to imbue the parochial pastor with a liking for the mild northern pastime.

Southron Caddie (Anglic, club boy), *log*: "I say, Bill, 'tain't no jolly silly as it looks arter all—there's cheatin' in it—I see our passion cheat your gent stunnin' jis now!"

[*Golf is a little redeemed in Bill's eyes*].—*Fun*.
"IN SOCIETY."

Mrs. A: "So sorry I couldn't keep my appointment with you yesterday, dear; but I had to go to the fête, you know—it was too delightful. The Shah was there!"

Mrs. B: "Oh, yes, I know. I saw you there."

Mrs. A. (confusedly): "Indeed!"

Mrs. B. (triumphantly): "Yes, as I drove by you were standing in the crowd."
[*Exeunt separately*].—*Fun*.

"GENERAL UTILITY."

Scene—Hotel Stables, North of Ireland.

Captain: "Hullo, Pat! What the deuce are you doing to the old mare?"

Pat: "Well, you see, capt'in, our old black hearse horse went lame yesterday that was wanted for Squire Dolerty's funeral, so I'm paintin' up the ould gray for the service. You see her body won't show, by reason of the housin', and I'll have to wash her elane ag'in for Miss McGinnety's weddin' on the morrow!"—*Punch*.

THE EAR.—Out West the human ear crop grows to an immense size—judging from the newspapers. Thus one editor says a brother contemporary can wag his left ear. Then the editor who is accused of wagging his left ear says the accuser has to cut slits in the rim of his hat to make room for his ears. Another man out there uses his ear for a napkin. Another can fan himself with his aural appendages; and still another employs his ear for an umbrella.

The champion earist, however, is an editor who wears several reefs in his ears to prevent his treading upon them as he walks!

THREE GOOD REASONS FOR ABSTAINING.—Mr. Brandydoddy's three reasons for not drinking are very characteristic of that gentleman. "Take something to drink?" said his friend to him one day. "No, thank you," replied Mr. B. "No! why not?" inquired his friend, in great amazement. "In the first place," returned Mr. Brandydoddy, "I am secretary to a temperance society that is to meet to-day, and I must show my temperance character. In the second place, this is the anniversary of my father's death, and out of respect for him I have promised never to drink on this day. And, in the third place, I have just taken something."

GENUINE "HAPPY THOUGHT."

The following advertisement lately appeared in the *Hampshire Advertiser*:

An intelligent young man (an artist), struck by a great grief, would much like to travel at sea for two or three years in a yacht, along the coasts of the Mediterranean; or to go and live in the south of Italy. To accomplish this purpose he would be glad to make the acquaintance of a lady having the same tastes, independent, and free, to whom he would be the humble and respectful companion. Address, in French and France, to Monsieur —, Paris, France.

Comment is unnecessary. Observe, however, how the man of business crops up in the last line. "And Franco,"—Anglic, prepay your letters. That he may get what he wants must be the sincere wish of all who read the above ingenuous effusion.—*Punch*.

WHAT IS'T TO LOVE?

What is't to love? To play a game
With mortal's heart and mock the name
Of Truth, Religion, Virtue, Fame?
To win affection's laurels fair,
And waste them on the desert air?

What is't to love? To twine a wreath,
To make the soul a fruitless heath,
Which beauty's life lies buried 'neath?
To blight an ardent spirit's youth,
And crush out all its faith in Truth?

What is't to love? To gall and fret
O'er fickle natures one has met,
And think all other suns are set?
To make fair Hope's horizon wear
An air of sadness, gloom, despair?

What is't to love? I've met the gay,
I've listened while they glibbed away,
But ne'er received of light a ray.
Have they indeed no love to give?
Can they without that treasure live?

I've met the pensive, thoughtful sad,
I've met the fop and pleasant lad,
I've been in scenes both grave and glad,
But not in all the earth's great round
An answer to my query found.

I've asked the poets whose the themes
To tell of love and all that seems
To back in wily Cupid's beams;
But they for me all fail to say
And aching night just call it day.

What is't to love? I long to know—
Oh, tell me, then, or friend or foe;
What is that priceless boon below?
Tell quick ere my youth is spent;
Tell quick while Cupid's bow is bent.

J. E. R.

GEMS.

THEY who respect themselves will be honoured; but they who do not care about their character will be despised.

NOTHING helps a soul, when beating on the shoals of misanthropy, as much as the sunshine of our warm, loving nature.

A MAN's nature rises either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one and destroy the other.

AN hour's industry will do more to begot cheerfulness, suppress ill-humours, and retrieve your affairs than a month's mourning.

THERE is a sure pledge not impaired, a shield never pierced, a flower that never dieth, a state that fear-eth no fortune, and a port that yields no danger.

PRESENTS GIVEN BY THE SHAH.—The Shah has presented a number of gifts to those who have been brought in contact with him on the occasion of his visit. Besides the present of jewels to the Queen, his photograph in diamonds to the Prince of Wales, and the sword to the Duke of Cambridge—which was accompanied by the happy expression that "he rejoiced to place the sword of Persia in the hand of England"—the Shah offered his photograph in diamonds to Earl Granville, who, with his well-known

tact, extracted the photograph, and, placing it to his heart, tendered his thanks for his Majesty's condescension, explaining as he returned the diamonds, that etiquette forbade an English minister to receive a present from a foreign sovereign. To Lady Rawlinson the Shah gave a tiara of diamonds, and to the Duchess of Sutherland a bracelet. Lord Morley received a valuable snuff box set with diamonds, and other officials suitable presents. To the servants at Buckingham Palace his Majesty gave 2,000*l*.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CLEANING BLACK MARBLE.—Mix a quantity of the strongest soap-lees with quicklime to the consistency of milk, and lay it on the stone, etc., for twenty-four hours; clean it afterwards with soap and water, and it will appear as new.

FOR CLEANING WHITE MARBLE.—Half a pound of pearlsh, one pound of whiting, half a pound of soft soap, all to be boiled together until quite thick, and put on the marble when nearly cold. It must remain on for twenty-four hours, then be washed off with soft water, and afterwards polished well with linen cloths.

PRESERVATION OF FOOD.—Carbolic acid paper, which is now much used for packing fresh meats for the purpose of preserving them against spoiling, is made by melting five parts of stearine at a gentle heat, and then stirring in thoroughly two parts of carbolic acid; after which five parts of melted paraffine are to be added. The whole is to be well stirred together until it cools; after which it is melted and applied with a brush to the paper, in quires, in the same way as in preparing the waxed paper so much used in Europe for wrapping various articles.

STATISTICS.

STATISTICS OF LONDON.—The Chief Commissioner of Police, at the request of the Shah, supplied his Majesty with some statistics of London, which greatly interested him, especially the fact that the streets of London patrolled by the police would reach from London to Teheran, and thence to Point de Galle, 6,612 miles. The following statistics were also supplied:—The area of London, consisting of the metropolitan police and the city police districts, is 499 square miles. The population, from the census tables of 1871, and the estimated increase to this date, 1873, affords a total population of 4,025,639. The total length of streets and roads patrolled by the metropolitan police is 6,612 miles. As the crow flies, from London to Point de Galle the distance is 6,600 miles. Teheran is in the line between these two places; 2,800 miles from London, and 3,800 miles from Point de Galle. The number of inhabited houses in the police districts is 523,794. The number of omnibuses is 1,400, and of hackney carriages 8,103. The estimated number of horses drawing public carriages is 25,000. The strength of the metropolitan police and the city police is 10,712. The numbers of cattle, sheep, etc., sold last year in the Metropolitan Cattle Market were:—Oxen, 240,000; sheep and lambs, 1,525,000; calves, 30,000; pigs, 8,500; total, 1,803,500. The quantity of dead meat brought to the Metropolitan Meat and Poultry Market during the year 1872 was 154,045 tons.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE new astracan cap, furnished to the Rifle Brigade, is a great improvement upon the old shako. It is extremely light, and very neat in its appearance.

GREAT TAKE OF SALMON.—A marvellous draw of salmon was taken from the Wye during Monday night, the total number being no less than 175, the whole of which were taken by two boats and five men. The total weight was 2,000 *lbs*.

A MONSTER DIAMOND.—A monster diamond has been received from the Cape weighing 258 and three-eighths carats. This is the largest diamond South Africa has furnished, and when cut it is estimated it will be half as large again as the Koh-i-noor.

THE SHAH AND THE BAGPIPES.—It is said that the Shah refused to visit Scotland, having formed his estimate of the people from their national music—the bagpipes—the performance on which made him feel seriously indisposed.

EARLY TRAINING.—At Marlborough House a mark-book is kept to show how the Royal children progress in their studies, and how far their general conduct is praiseworthy. The mark-book is diligently inspected by the Prince of Wales from time to time, who takes the greatest interest in his children's proficiency and behaviour. The Queen's journal tells us that this was the practice of the late Prince Consort, and, perpetuated by his son, it is an evidence of the good effects of early training.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. F. H.—Declined with many thanks.
CLINTON.—June 13, 1873. Only a few now survive, however.

A. Z. B.—No record has been published. But we think you might readily ascertain by inquiring of the proper officials at the station.

INQUIRER.—William Carleton, a celebrated Irish novelist, died January 30, 1869, aged 71. He was born in 1798 at Clogher. His "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" secured his fame as an author, and it was followed by many other popular works.

AMICUS.—1. The line "Coming events cast their shadows before" is by Campbell, and occurs in the magnificent poem called *Lochiel's Warning*. The same poet, also, is the author of the familiar line "Like angels' visits, few and far between." 2. The handwriting is decidedly good.

A. B.—The marriage would be illegal. It is much the same as marrying your nephew; a thing questionable physically and morally, and from usual disparity of age also, generally absurd. You will, by the way, find a list of the prohibited degrees of relationship at the end of any old prayer-book of the English Church.

B. T. (Bradford).—Declined with thanks. We can, in addition, only refer you to our constant notification, printed every week, from which we never deviate. We must state emphatically that we will in no case return rejected communications. They are sent on speculation, and a copy should be retained, if they are considered of real value.

CLARENCE.—We know nothing whatever of the person named. The Medical Directory, however, would inform you whether he is a duly qualified and registered practitioner. Why not try the Consumption Hospital at Brompton? The various convalescent homes—such as Mrs. Gladstone's—are often of signal service. Unfortunately, these homes are often made the vile means of indoctrinating the minds of the poor patients with many pernicious notions—a cowardly and most culpable imposition upon human weakness!

A. B. C.—We must decline to enter at length into the discussion of political questions. Still there is no doubt that the English democracy is gaining ground, especially as against the somewhat abnormal class of middle men whom we usually call masters. As we strongly believe in the generosity, good sense, and rare energy of our average English workmen, we are always glad to see them gaining ground. The democracy of England is the bone and sinew of national greatness, the source of all its strength and, under God, of much of its real goodness. And light and grace belong to the patrician order, and often high thought also.

S. R. H. (Rochdale).—The statement is strictly true. Every Popish bishop at his consecration takes a solemn oath to persecute and trample upon all heretics (all who don't agree with his teaching, including all Protestants and all independent men) and schematics to the utmost of his power. Here are the exact words, which we take from the Pontificale Romanum: "Hæreticos, schismaticos, et rebelles eidem Domino nostro vel successoribus predictis, pro posse persequar et impugnabo." A terrible formula, as we take it.

ASTONISHED.—We also are astonished. Each day brings "more inscriptions" and "more discoveries" from Assyria. And it is all nonsense, precisely like the inscriptions on the pickle jar in Dickens's story of "Pickwick." When learned men differ radically as to the letters, sounds, and words, how can we get any trustworthy information? It is impudent guesswork; and if early Assyrian and early Egyptian history were thrown overboard for ovals and bats the world would be no great loser. Khivan reporters and Stanley and Barnum are prepared, of course, to discover anything.

H. C. M.—1. All jams are made on a nearly similar principle, of which the following receipt is a fair specimen. To make raspberry jam: Mash a quantity of fine ripe, dry raspberries, strew on them their own weight of loaf sugar, and half their weight of white currant juice. Boil them half an hour over a clear, slow fire, skim them well, and put them into pots or glasses; tie them down with brandy papers, and keep them dry. Strew on the sugar as quickly as possible after the berries are gathered, and in order to preserve their flavour they must not stand long before boiling them. 2. To make currant jelly: Take the juice of red currants, 1 lb., sugar, 6 oz. Boil down.

THE MOUNTBANK, ETC.—The poems are somewhat juvenile, and we cannot make use of them. But there is a good flow about them, and we can honestly encourage you to proceed. *Macte virtute puer!* Read our best

poets, cultivate a good choice of words, and use your ear in measurement. As boys use bladders in beginning to swim so you might get and study (but not blindly rely on) Walker's Rhyming Dictionary. That is the only book in the language of the remotest service; many guides to rhyming being composed by men comparatively unlettered.

E. C. C.—The ancient order of the Canonical Hours is as follows: 1. Nocturns or Mattins, before daybreak and properly a night service. 2. Lauds, at daybreak, closely following matins, if not actually joined to it. 3. Prime, about six o'clock—"the first hour." 4. Terce or Tierce, at 9 a.m.—"the third hour." 5. Sexts, at noon—"the sixth hour." 6. Nones, at 3 p.m.—"the ninth hour." 7. Vespers, in the early evening. 8. Compline, the last evening service. We may add that six in the morning was the first hour with the Jews, and this explains many passages in the N. T. See John's Hebrew Antiquities passim.

MAGNOLIA.—1. It is not necessary to wear an engagement ring at all; it is only customary. So soon as the engagement has taken place the engagement ring may be worn. 2. We give you the "meanings" of the following names: reminding you that such "meanings" are for the most part fanciful, are always childish, and are to be usually gravely suspected. Many names never had any meaning at all; and where a heated fancy might suggest a meaning it has had often no connection with the actual nominal relation. However, we will give you the usual sense, or nonsense, on the subject: Nellie, as we thought you knew, is no name but the diminutive and familiar form of Ellen, which again may be perhaps connected with the heroine Helen—for whom no derivation can be given. Harriet is most probably connected with Henrious or Henry, the word meaning in the German "rich lord." William is said to be of German origin, and to mean "defending many." Frederick, again, is held to mean "rich peace." Ainsworth, the worthy old lexicographer, is responsible for these interpretations, which we think, however, it would be found difficult to justify. 3. Handwriting not to be called excellent; might be much improved by assiduous practice.

GAIN A FOOTHOLD!

What'er may be your lot in life,
Whether a husband or a wife,
A bachelor or widow fair,
Be this your first important care:
To look about you everywhere,
Then choose some sweet and sunny spot,
And buy a lot!

Earned by the labour of your hand,
How dear is every foot of land!
How sweet the summer breeze that passes,
And stops to wave your flowers and grasses!
Even your little lads and lasses
Lay claim to butterflies and bees,
That swarm their trees.

Some people travel all their days
From post to pillar, and their ways
Are full of prickly thorns and briars,
As ever was a monk's or friar's;
Home lights for them no altar-fires;
They have no stick, nor stock, nor stone,
To call their own!

If you once own your precious lot,
Take time to build yourself a cot,
Or dwelling-house of more pretensions;
Lay out your plans, take your dimensions,
The land is yours! there are no dissensions
Of right or title in the case;
You own your "place!" J. S.

HELENE J., dark hair, blue eyes, and fond of music and singing. Respondent must be tall, dark, and fond of music.

ROSIE, tall, fair, and with expectations, desires to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-two, tall, and a tradesman.

W. T. A., twenty, a seaman in the Royal Navy, desires to correspond with a young lady, pretty, loving, domesticated, and about his own age.

BERTHA, twenty-two, tall, dark-brown hair, and blue eyes. Respondent must be tall, dark, fond of home and children; a mechanic preferred.

HENRIETTA, twenty-three, tall, dark, loving, and fond of music, desires to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman, possessing a good income.

AGUSTUS, twenty-three, tall, dark complexion, and affectionate, desires to become acquainted with a fair, amiable young lady about twenty.

H. S. F., a seaman in the Royal Navy, 5ft. 9in., brown eyes, light hair, and curly, wishes to correspond with a domestic servant, tall, loving, and domesticated.

AMY, twenty-one, dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, and a housemaid, would like to correspond with a mechanic about twenty-four, tall, dark, loving, and fond of home.

EDITH S., eighteen, blue eyes, auburn hair, considered pretty, and well educated. Respondent must be about twenty-three, fair, of an amiable disposition, and fond of home.

ADA, twenty-three, dark complexion, brown hair and eyes, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-five, in a good position, and fond of home.

K. A. C., of medium height, dark, and considered handsome, accomplished, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, good looking, and must possess a good income.

JOSEPH, nineteen, light hair and eyes, affectionate, possessing a good income, and fond of children. Respondent must be pretty, domesticated and good tempered.

ALECK M., twenty-seven, rather tall, brown hair, dark-blue eyes, of a cheerful and loving disposition. Respondent must be fair, affectionate, domesticated, and fond of music.

HERBERT, twenty-five, dark, medium height, and with good prospects, would like to correspond with a well-educated young lady about twenty, loving, and fond of the drama.

EDWIN C., twenty-two, considered handsome, tall, fair,

having good prospects. Respondent must be pretty, of a loving disposition, domesticated, and a tradesman's daughter.

LUCILLE, twenty-one, medium height, fair complexion, blue eyes, and brown hair. Musical and artistic tastes greatly desired in a husband.

GROESBIA, eighteen, fair complexion, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, affectionate, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

DANIEL H., twenty-one, 5ft. 6in., fair complexion, light-brown hair, blue eyes, loving, and fond of home, and a mechanic. Respondent must be nineteen, tall, and affectionate.

MALVINA, twenty-four, tall, dark, loving, domesticated, and possessing an annual income. Respondent must be tall, dark, loving, and not more than twenty-six years of age.

HARRY BLUNT, a seaman in the Royal Navy, 5ft. 6in., blue eyes, brown hair, and is considered handsome. Respondent must be about twenty, of dark complexion and domesticated.

ESTHER, seventeen, tall, blue eyes, brown hair, and is considered pretty. Respondent must be medium height, light hair, fond of music and dancing, loving, and in a good position.

ANITA, a domestic servant, dark complexion, brown hair, gray eyes, and is loving and domesticated. Respondent must be handsome, loving, and a soldier going out to India preferred.

ALEXANDER P. C., twenty-four, fair complexion, dark-brown hair, gray eyes, of a loving disposition, and a mechanic. Respondent must be tall, about twenty-two, loving, and domesticated.

KATE, a domestic servant, fair complexion, light gray eyes, loving, and domesticated. Respondent must be good looking, affectionate, and a soldier; one going out to India by preference.

FLORA B., nineteen, medium height, fair, and considered pretty. Respondent must be about twenty-one, tall, fair complexion, light hair, of an even temper, and must occupy a good position.

NORAH E., twenty-two, medium height, fair complexion, considered pretty, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, good looking, and about twenty-five; a carpenter preferred.

ROBERTA B., twenty-two, tall, auburn hair, well educated and domesticated, is a milliner and dressmaker, and possessing a small income. Respondent must be tall, well educated and fond of home.

MAGGIE MAY, nineteen, dark hair and eyes, very pretty, domesticated, affectionate, and would make a happy life wife. Respondent must be fair, good looking, fond of home, and not more than twenty-two.

ELLA E., twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, considered rather good looking, is loving, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, good looking, loving, and fond of home; a traveller preferred.

M. A. C., good looking, thoroughly domesticated and accomplished, and has a private income of her own, desires to correspond with a young gentleman, about twenty-four, tall, dark, good looking, and must have an income of from 300 to 500 per annum.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:
JUAN is responded to by—"Caroline B.," who is fair, medium height, and thinks she would suit him.

LOUIS T. by—"M. E. M.," tall, dark, and good looking.

JENNIE by—"David M.," twenty-four, fond of home, and is a mechanic.

ROSIE J. by—"F. W. C.," nineteen, a clerk, who believes he is all she requires.

HARRIET B. by—"W. B. F.," twenty-three, tall, dark, affectionate, and fond of home.

JESSIE by—"W. H.," tall, fair, fond of music, and thinks that he is all she requires.

F. F. by—"Annie," seventeen, fair complexion, brown hair, blue eyes, and of a loving disposition.

M. A. H. by—"Lively Nell," 5ft. 5in., pretty, loving, domesticated, and a tradesman's daughter.

SIDNEY C. by—"M. A. V.," nineteen, dark, black eyes, light complexion, domesticated and affectionate.

ROSEBUD by—"Yachtsman," twenty-three, who is tall, dark, and loving, and thinks he is all she requires.

E. T. by—"Christopher," twenty-two, a seaman in the Royal Navy, light hair, 5ft. 7in., and thinks he is all she requires.

JACK THE BOWMAN by—"Ethel," dark complexion, dark hair and eyes, and thinks that she will suit him admirably.

ADAMOUS GEORGE by—"Amanda F.," nineteen, a nursemaid, brown hair, medium height, educated and thoroughly domesticated.

SIDNEY C. by—"Dehila," nineteen, short, brown hair and eyes, loving, and domesticated, very pretty, and thinks she is all he requires.

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